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*The Tragic Muse of
John Ford*

The
Tragic Muse of
JOHN FORD

By
G. F. SENSABAUGH



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The Tragic Muse of **JOHN FORD**

By G. F. SENSABAUGH

John Ford stands in the eyes of competent critics as a poet of considerable stature. As a playwright, however, Ford is placed in the uncertain position of being called both the high priest of decadence and a prophet of the modern world.

Moreover, his title of prophet has never been clarified.

The purpose of this study is to make clear why Ford deserves his title of prophet. This volume shows how Ford absorbed a belief in scientific determinism and a faith in unbridled individualism, both of which emerged in his age and which subsequently became marks of the modern mind; it also reveals how, as a result of these faiths, Ford presented dilemmas almost identical with those in the modern tragedies of Henrik Ibsen and of Eugene O'Neill. By thus anticipating the dilemmas of modern thought, Ford not only stands unique in his age but also deserves a new place in the annals of English drama.

Dr. Sensabaugh, associate professor of English at Stanford University, is the author of a number of journal articles dealing with the English Renaissance period

To
E. A. S.

Preface

JOHN FORD has of late commanded increasing attention from scholars. In 1933 Mary E. Cochnower pointed out the affiliations of Ford's ideas; in 1935 M. Joan Sargeaunt critically examined his life and works; and in 1940 S. Blaine Ewing traced the influence of Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* upon the bulk of his plays. Quite apart from these full-length studies, articles scattered through periodicals during the last decade attest a growing interest in Ford's drama. Furthermore, for over one hundred years editors and critics have given him generous treatment. They have praised his poetry, made him the last of a race of giants, and hinted at his relation to modern thought. Yet in spite of such comment and criticism, Ford's position in the annals of English drama remains uncertain and vague.

The chief reason why Ford remains in this uncertain position is that few critics have tried to discover what his plays have to say about man. Romantic critics, to be sure, have found Ford's rebellion attractive, Victorians have deplored his treatment of adultery and incest, and moderns have found in his significant plays a point of view strangely familiar. They all agree, moreover, that Ford has something to say and that he says it effectively. Yet Ford's dramatic world and the philosophy inherent in it have never been properly explored, and as a consequence the stamp Ford put upon life has remained blurred and obscure. The present study therefore undertakes the dubious task of trying to discover, through an examination of Ford's immediate *milieu*, what his serious plays attempted to say and why what they say, as critics have often suggested, sounds familiar to modern man. In short, this volume attempts to show how the age stamped Ford and what stamp Ford in turn put on his age.

Ford's independent plays written between (ca.) 1628 and 1639 have served as a basis for this study. The omission of his youthful effusions, except for a passing reference or two, and of his plays written in collaboration with his fellow playwrights can be justified only on the contention that his independent plays best represent his mature thought. I have included *The Queen, Or The Excellency of Her Sex*, since most Ford scholars agree that it was written during Ford's later years and that it is entirely by his hand. References to all plays are by line number, as indicated in Bang's *Materialien zur Kunde des älteren Englischen Dramas* and in Henry De Vocht's continuation of the series in *Materials for the Study of the Old English Drama*. The original spelling has been maintained in the quotations; many titles, however, have been shortened and modernized.

To the editors of *Studies in Philology*, *Philological Quarterly*, and *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, I am grateful for permission to reproduce in part articles previously published. To Miss Dorothy F. Atkinson, Professor Francis R. Johnson, and Dr. Louis B. Wright, who have read the manuscript, and to Professors Hardin Craig and Ernest Marchand, who saw it in an earlier stage, I am indebted for many helpful suggestions. To Professor George C. Taylor must go the credit for first inspiring this work. To the staffs of the British Museum, the Bodleian Library, and the Folger Library I wish to express great thanks. To the Henry E. Huntington Library and its staff I owe especial thanks; without a fellowship which the Library awarded and without many courtesies of the Library personnel, I would not yet have completed this work. To the Committee on Research and the Committee on University Publications, both of Stanford University, I am indebted for grants which have made the publication of this volume possible.

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CHAPTER I

Fame and Confusion

I

JOHN FORD stands in the eyes of competent critics as a poet of considerable stature. Commentary uniformly commends his solemn blank verse and his poetic power; editors include at least one of his plays in every important collection of Renaissance drama. Indeed, Charles Lamb places him in the "first order of poets";¹ and subsequent criticism, though less adulatory, unanimously maintains that Ford's polish and skill entitle him to fame in an age which gave England Shakespeare. Swinburne, for example, describes Ford's poetry as "piercing and intense of sight, steady and sure of stroke, solemn and profound of strain";² and even Hazlitt, one of Ford's most severe critics, admits that the poetry of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* shows a "power of simple painting and polished style."³ Furthermore, twentieth-century scholars agree with these able critics. M. Joan Sargeaunt, for instance, in a recent review of Ford's reputation, concludes that Ford's plays present "a body of poetry direct in expression and of grave and passionate import penetrated by a knowledge of the motives that sway the actions

¹ Charles Lamb, *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* (London, 1854), p. 228.

² Algernon Charles Swinburne, *Essays and Studies* (London, 1875), p. 304.

³ William Hazlitt, *Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* (New York, 1849), p. 109.

of mankind.”⁴ It is clear that Ford as a poet receives unquestioned acclaim.

But where Ford stands as a playwright is neither clear nor unquestioned. In fact, so sharp is the clash of critical opinion that recent scholarship doubts whether “there will ever be agreement among the critics of Ford.”⁵ The growth of two opposing traditions from the time of Charles Lamb to that of modern scholars, moreover, lends credence to the view that Ford’s position in the annals of English drama must remain indeterminate. One tradition holds that Ford should be deemed high priest of decadence, an example *par excellence* of Elizabethan dramatic decline. Thus William Hazlitt, probably the immediate father of this tenacious tradition, accuses Ford of playing with “edged tools” and knowing the use of “poisoned weapons,”⁶ an accusation which later crystallized into an unyielding dogma of Ford’s degenerate place in the drama. A second tradition, perhaps born of Charles Lamb’s sincere praise, argues that Ford stands as a prophet of modern times, foreseeing contemporary values and problems. Thus Emil Koeppel finds *The Broken Heart* expressing “ein ganz moderner Gedankengang,”⁷ and one recent critic feels that “in this age we are in outlook nearer to Ford than the generations of the intervening centuries.”⁸

Little commentary lies completely outside these two main traditions. Sometimes one tradition wholly dominates a critical estimate of Ford, sometimes the other. Moody and Lovett, for example, in their *History of English Literature*, adhere solely to the opinion that Ford was of the decadence:

⁴ M. Joan Sargeaunt, *John Ford* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1935), p. 187.

⁵ Sargeaunt, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

⁶ Hazlitt, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

⁷ *Quellen-Studien zu den Dramen George Chapman’s, Philip Massinger’s und John Ford’s* (Strassburg, 1897), p. 175.

⁸ Sargeaunt, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

But while his work shows no sign of degeneration in respect to form, his deliberate turning away from the healthy and normal in human life, and the strange morbid melancholy which shadows his work, betray very plainly that he is of the decadence.⁹

On the other hand, John Buchan, in his *History of English Literature*, extols Ford's modernity:

Ford is the most modern of the Elizabethans. He studied the springs of action, and as the exponent of the naked human soul is akin in his subtle analysis to Stendhal, Flaubert, and the Goncourts.¹⁰

More often, however, these two traditions appear vaguely joined and thus present a confused clash of critical opinion. Stuart Sherman, cognizant of this confused clash, made an adroit though none too successful attempt to reconcile the two by portraying Ford as a propounder of social dilemmas and problems which, because they appear familiar to contemporary minds, seem modern but which, because they hastened the dissolution of Renaissance custom and law, may be considered to have nourished the germs of decadence. Thus Stuart Sherman contends that *The Broken Heart* enjoys the unique distinction of being the first problem play in English; but he hastens to add that, since this play subtly attacks the established ethical order, it therefore contributed to the decline of the drama:

It is the forerunner of a long line of modern plays which attack from many different approaches the same problem. We cannot, to-day, call it decadent work, because the ideas involved are now familiar and old; our liberal divorce courts deal with the situation as a part of their business in the existing order. But we must remember that not Shakespeare, nor Jonson, nor Dekker, nor

⁹ Moody and Lovett, *A History of English Literature* (Chicago, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918), p. 154.

¹⁰ John Buchan, *A History of English Literature* (New York, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1929), p. 183.

Webster had ever presented the problem of the *Broken Heart*.
¹¹

This crumbling and dissolution of the established order seems to me the proper meaning to attach to the term decadence.¹²

In short, from a Renaissance point of view Ford may be judged decadent because he helped dissolve the existing Renaissance order; but in contemporary eyes he stands as a modern because of his very rebellion. Now, such adroitness in criticism may be admirable; unfortunately, however, it still leaves Ford in an uncertain position. For calling Ford's revolt against the existing order both decadent and modern is a juggling of terms which gives rise to even further confusion.

Thus whether John Ford is high priest of decadence or prophet of a modern world is a critical problem yet unsolved. He may be both; but this hardly implies, as Stuart Sherman contends, that prophet and priest mean the same. Rather, it may indicate that his decadence is one thing, his modernity another; and that the confusion which hangs over Ford's place in the drama is a result of not recognizing the difference between them. A further separation of these two main traditions may reveal a sharp difference between prophet and priest and in so doing may indicate the procedure necessary for clarifying Ford's place in the annals of English drama.

II

The tradition which claims that Ford should be recorded as the high priest of decadence bestows upon him this title because of his sins of excess. Without a single dissent, critics in this tradition agree that Ford's comedy sinks to a depth of innuendo and filth which earlier play-

¹¹ Stuart Sherman, in *John Fordes Dramatische Werke. Materialien zur Kunde des älteren Englischen Dramas* (ed. W. Bang, Louvain, 1908), Band XXIII, Introduction, p. xi.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

wrights had not dared to plumb. Thus Professor Neilson, in his comparison of Ford's comedy with that of earlier writers of similar rank, concludes that Ford's plays should be judged the lowest:

Finally, in his attempts at comedy, Ford sinks to a lower level than any dramatist of his class, and his farce lacks the justification of much of the coarse buffoonery of his predecessors. It is not realistic; it is not the expression of high spirits; it is a perfunctory attempt to season tragedy and romance with an admixture of rubbish, without humour and without joy.¹³

Moreover, Ford's tragedy, upon which his fame as a dramatist rests, receives the same acrimonious censure. Commentary usually agrees that Ford pandered to an audience growing jaded and tired, and that he heaped horror upon horror until no scene, however bloody, could further bead the brow or prickle the spine. It also contends that both his romance and his tragedy not only abound in scenes of eroticism and of lecherous intent but also attempt to arouse sexual passion for the sake of passion alone. A few comments from well-known critics of drama will illustrate these traditional notions. Professor Thorndike, in his study of the nature and function of tragedy, charges that Ford exhibits decadent excesses similar to the worst of Fletcher and Shirley:

His absorption with questions of sex, his searching for new sensation, his attempt to bestow on moral perversion the enticements of poetry correspond with what is most decadent in Fletcher and Shirley.¹⁴

Professor Schelling speaks more fully to the same point: There is little question that as the age went on it demanded a stronger sensational diet and it was here that it found what it

¹³ William Allan Neilson, in *The Cambridge History of English Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 1919), VI, 196. Quoted by special permission of The Macmillan Company, American publishers.

¹⁴ Ashley H. Thorndike, *Tragedy* (New York, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1908), p. 229.

craved, not only by robustly heaping together horror upon horror but by, what was far worse, a pandering, in the brilliant but, some of them, degenerate plays of Ford, to a pruriency of taste which the cleaner age of Shakespeare had not known.¹⁵

So strong is the notion that Ford plumbed the depths of dramatic crime to an extent unequaled by men of his age that Professor Tucker Brooke states unequivocally that after him no playwright could hope to attract further attention:

After Ford, there was no psychological abnormality, no imaginable depth of misery or excess of half-crazed passion, which could stimulate any longer dramatic attention.¹⁶

Proponents of this tradition tend to exaggerate the extent of Ford's crimes; yet that Ford was decadent in this comparative sense is certain and clear. His comedies teem with the cheapest of wit; his tragedies equal and possibly excel in sensationalism those of John Webster and James Shirley. His principal characters, tortured with burning desires, whisper lecherous pleas and utter arguments for clandestine love which exceed in prurience some of the most erotic scenes in the plays of John Fletcher. Held up in this manner for comparison with men of his age, Ford clearly displays those dramatic sins of excess which common consent agrees to have forwarded dramatic decay; and for this reason alone, as tradition insists, Ford may rightly bear his title of high priest of decadence. So clear is this title for the reasons just given that no further questions arise.

The tradition which deems Ford a modern prophet, however, is neither clear nor explicit. Critics in this tradition associate him with modern thought; yet their reasons for so doing are general if not downright vague. Have-

¹⁵ Felix E. Schelling, *Foreign Influences in Elizabethan Plays* (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1923), p. 72.

¹⁶ C. F. Tucker Brooke, *The Tudor Drama* (New York, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911), p. 446.

lock Ellis, for instance, considers Ford "the most modern of the tribe to whom he belonged"; then he goes on to say:

He was an analyst; he strained the limits of his art to the utmost; he foreboded new ways of expression. Thus he is less nearly related to the men who wrote *Othello*, and *A Woman killed with Kindness*, and *Valentinian*, than to those poets and artists of the naked human soul, the writer of *Le Rouge et le Noir*, and the yet greater writer of *Madame Bovary*.¹⁷

To say that Ford is more closely related to Flaubert than to Shakespeare, or that he strains the limits of his art and forebodes new ways of expression, is not to make clear those specific qualities of mind which associate Ford with modern thought. Moreover, other critics show the same vague approach:

[*'Tis Pity She's a Whore*] is modern in feeling rather than for all time; it is not the ice-cold words of Hamlet and the Grave-digger that we hear, but something very much nearer to ourselves, that appeals especially to us, as we stand to-day perhaps, who knows, on the verge of a new age of faith.¹⁸

To leave Ford's modernity thus in the realm of "feeling" may satisfy an occultist; but a mundane scholar, seeking to discover the cast of Ford's thought, may modestly ask what this feeling is, particularly if it is related to a new age of faith upon whose verge we now stand. In short, from Charles Lamb, who extolled Ford for pursuing a "right line even in obliquity," to John Buchan, who called him the "most modern of the Elizabethans," critics have associated Ford with modern faiths and beliefs; but they have neither made that association clear nor defined the specific faiths which allow him to claim his title of prophet.

Thus, although Ford has been accorded two definite

¹⁷ Havelock Ellis, *John Ford* (London, Vizetelly & Co., 1888), p. xvii.

¹⁸ E. H., "John Ford," *The Academy*, LX (1901), 430.

titles during the last century of criticism, only one has been clearly bestowed. Melodrama, sensationalism, and dramatic excesses of all kinds undoubtedly make him high priest of decadence; his philosophy of life, as revealed through the dramatic world he created, just as undoubtedly associates him with the mind of modern man. Recognition of this difference between prophet and priest, moreover, clarifies in some measure his anomalous position. But, since critics have yet to define his philosophy, his relation to modern thought and hence his title of prophet remain obscure.

III

The unquestioned fame of Ford as a poet demands a consideration of his dramatic world and of the philosophy in it so that his title of prophet, and thus his place in the drama, may be clearly established. Such a consideration, however, is beset with many scholarly pitfalls. In the first place, an attempt to discover what Ford really thought is in itself perilous. Other than a few early prose pieces and poems, he left no statement of his philosophy; and what may be inferred from his mature plays is at best only an indication, not a final demonstration, of his faiths and beliefs. Second, an endeavor to characterize the modern mind so that Ford may be held up in comparison to it appears at the outset to be highly presumptuous; for so diverse are human interests today and so complex is modern thought that it is hard to find agreement even among men of similar training and taste. Finally, an effort to relate Ford's faiths to modern thought is at best dubious in that the association is bound to be broad. Yet risks of inference, of oversimplification, and of broad association must be taken not only to reveal Ford's philosophy but also to relate it to modern thought and hence to secure for him his title of prophet.

Perhaps the first logical step in making clear Ford's title of prophet involves describing a few beliefs and di-

lemmas generally unknown to Renaissance man but considered today as marks of the modern mind. Widely accepted by modern man is the belief that scientific laws determine the course of his life. This belief, which began to affect English thought early in the seventeenth century, sprang from scientific inquiries into the nature of man, grew swiftly through succeeding years, and has become in modern times a fixed habit of mind. This belief has so directed the course of contemporary life that old Renaissance values, such as the idea of retributive justice, for example, in reality no longer obtain. In fact, modern man deliberately seeks the meaning of life, not in a study of morals and ethics, but in the discovery of physical laws; and the result has been that man now observes crime and defection with clinical eyes. Witness, for example, the approach of Havelock Ellis to problems of morals and sex. He, with Bertrand Russell and hosts of like-minded men, convinced that misbehavior is simply behavior, probes conventional sins with an air of detachment similar to that of a mechanic examining a defective machine. As a consequence of this scientific approach, evil loses the appearance of evil, for the very reason that scientifically no evil exists. Whatever else modern man may believe, his conviction that life is determined by amoral forces, with the logical corollary that actions resulting from these amoral forces must themselves be viewed with complete amorality, distinguishes the man of today from his Renaissance ancestor.

A second belief which distinguishes modern man from his Renaissance forebears is his faith in the supreme authority of the individual. This faith is not to be confused with the perennial desire of all humanists for liberty and individual rights; instead, it is to be associated with passionate and often unbridled rebellion. Stemming from the Reformation and growing rapidly during the Renaissance, this faith helped produce religious schism in the seventeenth

century, Romanticism in the eighteenth, and "rugged individualism" in the century just past. Wherever found, such individualism expresses a caustic mistrust of institutions and laws; its exponents are always professed rebels. Milton in his pamphleteer years, Rousseau in his *Émile*, and Byron in his *Childe Harold* illustrate a cast of mind which modern men now claim for their own. This association of unbridled individualism with modernity may have no logical basis; nevertheless, the association exists. In fact, individualism carried to a degree which would have astonished both Richard Hooker and William Shakespeare is generally considered to be a sign of the modern and emancipated mind.

These two marks of the modern mind—belief in scientific determinism and faith in extreme individualism—will serve to identify Ford with modern thought. This identification, however, may await later analysis. At the present juncture it is more important to explore further the mind of today by examining the dilemmas these faiths have produced in modern writers. In *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley portrays the clash of old moral laws and new scientific injunctions; in addition, he describes sharp and disturbing dilemmas which arise from these conflicts. In *The Waste Land*, T. S. Eliot paints the hollow despair that attends the modern faith in individualism. Both authors imply that no matter how much man may wish to guide his course through the world by science or by claims of the ego, old gods and myths arise to prevent him from pursuing a strictly logical path. The modern Samaritan, contrary to what Albert Wiggam in *The New Decalogue of Science* suggests, cannot pass by on the other side with a clear conscience simply because he is not sure that his oil and wine are free from bacteria; nor can the modern egoist escape the injunctions of the moral world merely because he puts faith in individual whim. Thus, unable to accept wholeheartedly either old moral values or the new com-

mandments of modern faiths, the man of today has reached an ethical impasse.

This ethical impasse has been central in most great English poetry of the last one hundred years. Lord Tennyson, in *In Memoriam*, shows the problems which arise from the clash between science and inherited religious beliefs; Robert Browning, in *The Ring and the Book*, reiterates the dilemmas which spring from pressing to a logical extreme the individual's claim against custom and law. Perhaps this ethical impasse has affected the nature and function of tragedy, however, more than the matter of poems. For tragedy no longer means, as of old, man's defeat in a world of retributive justice, where defects of character bring man to his doom; instead, tragedy means recognition of implacable physical laws which run athwart human hopes and ideals. Henrik Ibsen's *The Wild Duck* questions the value of traditional virtue by probing it with scientific laws; Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude* toys with "scientific" adultery as a cure for Nina's libido, and in addition makes it appear that the individual suffers because he adheres to conventional ethics. In both plays the individual strengthens his case against old human ideals by appealing to facts or methods of science. Sharp dilemmas thus arise, and contemplation of these dilemmas, which admit of no clear-cut resolution, leads to hopeless despair and confusion.

This brief analysis of modern faiths and dilemmas makes no attempt at completeness; its shortcomings are so obvious that apology for it is superfluous. Brief as it is, however, it serves the purpose of this study in that it describes those faiths and dilemmas which not only moved Henrik Ibsen to write *Ghosts* but also, strange as it seems, motivated John Ford in his most significant plays. Yet that Ford should have foreseen at the close of the Renaissance the dilemmas inherent in modern tragedy is not strange if his plays are viewed with the perspective of his

immediate *milieu*. During his time science took root, flourished apace, and gave rise to a belief later described as scientific determinism; and social and political revolts, which shook the foundations of English institutional life, engendered ideas of liberty and individualism subsequently claimed by modern man. If John Ford absorbed these faiths and ideas and revealed in his tragedies the very dilemmas they later produced in the modern mind, he can be considered a genuine prophet and should therefore be given a new place in the annals of English drama.

CHAPTER 2

Scientific Determinism

THE SEVENTEENTH century witnessed the birth of modern thought. Under the impact of the "new philosophy," medieval conceptions of man and the cosmos began to disintegrate, and ideas which now pass for modern began to emerge. Drawing distinctions between religion and science, Francis Bacon envisioned a universe governed by physical statutes; experimenting by the new method, Galileo and William Harvey uncovered scientific truths about man and the stars. Such thought and discovery promoted the founding of the Royal Society; and before the century closed Sir Isaac Newton had conceived of his great world machine. The seventeenth century thus saw the growth of ideas which are in every sense modern. For the aim to discover the physical basis of life still animates science, and the belief in scientific determinism, which logically grew from this aim, has become dominant in the modern mind.

In this atmosphere of scientific discovery and thought John Ford matured and wrote for the stage. Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum* came from the press in the same year that Ford published *A Line of Life*, his philosophical treatise in prose; William Harvey's *Exercitatio* appeared simultaneously with Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy*, his first independent play. No evidence exists, however, to indicate that Ford had read either work; but he seems to have been acquainted with the *History of Henry*

VII¹ and, as a student, doubtless explored other volumes of Bacon, or even genuine scientific documents. It would have been difficult indeed for a man of Ford's studious habits to escape the influence of the new philosophy which was destined to shape modern thought.

It appears not only that Ford failed to escape being influenced but that he wholeheartedly embraced scientific thought in his day. He apparently sought his scientific knowledge, however, not in the works of Harvey or Bacon but in Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, a volume of popular science. At any rate, Ford referred to this volume in his first play of importance; he could have found in it, moreover, the same aims and beliefs which moved scientists then and which motivate men of today. How Ford absorbed from the *Anatomy* faiths and beliefs which associate him with modern thought is a logical story never before told.

I

The use John Ford made of the *Anatomy of Melancholy* has long been a matter of record. As early as 1691 Gerard Langbaine, in *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets*, briefly mentioned Burton's influence on Ford; and subsequent scholars have traced the details of this influence upon most of his plays.² In the main, Ford's

¹ Ford apparently used Bacon's *History of Henry VII* as a source for his chronical play, *Perkin Warbeck*. See, however, Mildred C. Struble, "The Indebtedness of Ford's 'Perkin Warbeck' to Gainsford," *Anglia*, XLIX (1926), 80-91.

² See Gerard Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (Oxford, 1691), p. 221; *The Dramatic Works of John Ford* (ed. Henry Weber, 1811), I, 164 and 177 ff.; Octavius Gilchrist, *A Letter to William Gifford, esq. on the Late Edition of Ford's Plays* (London, 1811), p. 41; *The Dramatic Works of John Ford* (ed. William Gifford, London, 1827), I, 71 ff.; Max Wolff, *John Ford, ein Nachahmer Shakespeare's* (Heidelberg, 1880), p. 40; Emil Koeppel, *op. cit.*, p. 173; Stuart Sherman, "Ford's Debt to His Predecessors and Contemporaries, and His Contribution to the Decadence of the Drama" (unpublished Harvard dissertation, 1906), pp. 175 ff., 405; Mary E.

use of Burton has been considered a singular phenomenon, unrelated to the public excitement for scientific discoveries or to the evolution of scientific thought in Ford's day. For this reason, Ford's study of Burton, however extensive and serious, has been presented as a whimsy of Ford's particular genius, and what he found in the *Anatomy* has been associated, not with genuine, but with popular scientific thought.

Now, serious use of Burton's *Anatomy* was, in Ford's day, a common experience. Stuart and Caroline citizens, in their excitement over the wonders of scientific discovery, accepted uncritically the claims of popular science along with significant disclosures of truth. True scientists, to be sure, were responsible for arousing public excitement. Galileo's announcement in 1610 of his discovery of Jupiter's moons and of countless stars in the Milky Way both fired the imagination of men and led them to bestow upon the new scientists an authority formerly given only to Aristotle and Ptolemy—particularly in England, where by the first quarter of the seventeenth century handbooks and religious works had begun to refer to Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, and Galileo.³ Such discoveries, moreover, not only created excitement and elicited public acclaim but also attracted further attention by arousing sharp and bitter opposition. One of Galileo's opponents wrote:

. . . these satellites of Jupiter are invisible to the naked eye, and therefore can exercise no influence on the earth, and therefore would be useless, and therefore do not exist . . .⁴

Cochnowar, "John Ford," in *Seventeenth Century Studies* (ed. Robert Shafer, Princeton, 1933); M. Joan Sargeant, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-111; and S. Blaine Ewing, *Burtonian Melancholy in the Plays of John Ford* (Princeton, 1940).

³ Francis R. Johnson, *Astronomical Thought in Renaissance England* (Baltimore, 1937), p. 249.

⁴ Quoted from John H. Randall, *The Making of the Modern Mind* (New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1926), p. 233.

But despite such opposition, Stuart and Caroline citizens were generally impressed by the "philosophy" which could produce wonder upon wonder, and their enthusiasm waxed as the century progressed.

Public enthusiasm, however, as is true in all ages, outran sound judgment. It is doubtful whether more than a handful of men understood the inductive method,⁵ or whether a greater number made distinctions between Francis Bacon and Harvey, or even between Harvey and Burton. As a consequence, much that passed for science in the seventeenth century cannot now be called science at all. Works on astrology, magic, and witchcraft piled high on London bookstalls; and men answered questions of everyday life by reference to their apparent scientific authority. Physicians accepted astrology and magic as handmaidens to healing; the official London Pharmacopoeia included remedies such as claws, cock's combs, feathers, snake skins, spider webs, and wood lice.⁶ Distinctions between the false and the true simply failed to exist.

Yet the failure to draw sharp distinctions between the false and the true cannot be laid to public excitement alone. Genuine science and its popular counterpart, however different their methods, possessed similar aims in that they both attempted to find the physical statutes governing man and his world. This similarity no doubt allowed popular science to parade under the aegis of truth; and perhaps the most influential popular science to receive this protection developed from the ancient "four humours" doctrine of Hippocrates and Galen.⁷ Beginning with

⁵ Louis B. Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill, 1935), pp. 549 ff.

⁶ A. Wolf, *A History of Science Technology, and Philosophy in the 16th & 17th Centuries* (New York, 1935), p. 426.

⁷ Scholarship of late attests the powerful influence of this popular science. See P. Ansell Robin, *The Old Physiology in English Literature* (London, 1911); Ruth Anderson, *Elizabethan Psychology and Shakespeare's Plays* (Iowa City, 1927); Lily B. Campbell, *Shakespeare's*

Timothy Bright's *A Treatise of Melancholie* in 1586, volumes explaining the doctrine issued from the press at a phenomenal rate. Juan Huarte's *The Examination of mens Wits* ran through four editions from 1594 to 1616; Thomas Wright's *The Passions of the minde in generall* appeared five times between 1601 and 1630; and Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, perhaps the most widely read and without doubt the most comprehensive, passed through five editions from 1621 to 1638. Moreover, these popular books, systematizing and making clear for general consumption the four-humours doctrine, announced to the world that they could cure all diseases, answer all problems, and clear up all the vagaries of human behavior.⁸ They claimed, in short, to have discovered the laws governing man's course in the world; and in thus reducing life to physical laws (however false they appear today), these "anatomies" both fulfilled a main aim of science and contributed to the belief in scientific determinism which now dominates the modern mind.

The serious use Ford made of Burton thus fits into the

Tragic Heroes: Slaves of Passion (Cambridge, 1930); and H. K. Russell, "Certain Doctrines of Natural and Moral Philosophy as an Approach to the Study of Elizabethan Drama; with an Appendix Containing Illustrative Material from the Plays of Ben Jonson" (unpublished dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1931).

See also Murray W. Bundy, "Shakespeare and Elizabethan Psychology," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XXIII (1924), 516-49; Hardin Craig, "Shakespeare's Depiction of Passions," *Philological Quarterly*, IV (1925), 289-301; Mary Isabelle O'Sullivan, "Hamlet and Dr. Timothy Bright," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, XLI (1926), 667-79; Carroll Camden, Jr., "Marlowe and Elizabethan Psychology," *Philological Quarterly*, VIII (1929), 69-78; *idem*, "Tamburlaine: The Cholerick Man," *Modern Language Notes*, XLIV (1929), 430-35; H. K. Russell, "Tudor and Stuart Dramatizations of the Doctrine of Natural and Moral Philosophy," *Studies in Philology*, XXXI (1934), 1-27; and Lawrence Babb, "The Physiological Conception of Love in the Elizabethan and Early Stuart Drama," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, LVI (1941), 1020-35.

⁸ Hardin Craig, *The Enchanted Glass* (New York, 1936), p. 114.

pattern of seventeenth-century experience; with most Stuart and Caroline citizens, Ford doubtless considered the *Anatomy of Melancholy* a repository of scientific truth and turned to its pages for enlightenment about the condition of man. But of greater importance is the fact that he could have found in this volume a scientific determinism essentially no different from that which accompanies the theory that hormones control the course of man through the world. In a very real sense, Robert Burton stands cheek by jowl with modern exponents of the physical basis of life; and if John Ford absorbed Burton's philosophy he could legitimately claim kinship with genuine scientific thought.

II

The deterministic philosophy inherent in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* is based on the old four-humours doctrine of Hippocrates and Galen. This doctrine, after gathering numerous accretions from medieval lore, emerged in the Renaissance as a corpus of authoritative comment upon the nature of man's body and soul.⁹ From the very beginning, the doctrine emphasized the physiological basis of human behavior; yet it was also concerned with the ethical part of man's life and hence became known as "moral philosophy." But as the spirit of science became more influential, particularly in the first part of the seventeenth century, this doctrine became less a study of moral philosophy and more a clinical analysis of the ills of mankind. The *Anatomy of Melancholy*, perhaps the last great volume concerning the doctrine, exemplifies this change by addressing itself not to moral philosophy but to an amoral physical therapy.

A main purpose of the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, in fact,

⁹ For a full treatment of Renaissance "anatomies," see Lily B. Campbell, *Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes: Slaves of Passion* (Cambridge, 1930).

is to present numerous therapies for the mental and physical diseases of man. But prior to assembling his long roster of cures, Burton analyzes, in accordance with the four-humours theory, the structure of man's body and soul and in so doing reveals the essential determinism of the whole doctrine. He begins by describing the nature and functions of the humours themselves, which were believed to reside in the main mass of blood.¹⁰ First, he describes blood, a humour characteristically hot, sweet, temperate, and red. This humour, he continues, is prepared in the veins and in the liver and apparently spreads to all parts of the body. Next, he points out the function of phlegm, which is always cold and moist and which, generated in the colder part of the liver, nourishes and moistens all members of the body, such as the tongue, for example, so that it may not become over-dry. Third, Burton delineates choler, a hot, dry, and bitter humour, which, engendered in the hot chylus, collects in the gall, thus "concocting" natural heat and serving to facilitate the expulsion of waste. Last, he depicts melancholy, a humour of unexaggerated importance; cold, black, dry, thick, and sour, and purged from the spleen, it serves as a bridle to blood and choler and preserves those two hot humours in the blood. It also nourishes the bones. These four humours, Burton traditionally adds, possess some analogy to the four elements and to the four ages of man.

Burton thus makes it clear that the four humours permeate the physical structure of man. But in themselves they possess no animation; they are controlled by the soul. Before Burton discusses the complexities of the seventeenth-century soul, however, he explains spirits, which connect body and mind.¹¹ Generated in the heart, "ex-

¹⁰ *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Oxford, 1628), pp. 14 ff. This edition, with frontispiece illustrations, was the most popular in Ford's time.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

pressed" from the blood, and afterward conveyed to the brain, these spirits appear in three different kinds according to the different organs from which they are expelled. Natural spirits, germinating in the liver alone, spread through the body by means of a network of veins to provide physical nourishment; vital spirits, engendered in the heart from the natural, are conveyed through long, hollow arteries for the purpose of keeping man's mysterious flame burning; and animal spirits, formed from the vital, arise first to the brain and diffuse through all parts of the body through a system of marrow-filled nerves so that man's sensuous life may operate properly. All these spirits are dominated by the soul, which is the seat of all human behavior.

Thus the doctrine of humours rightly focused most of its interest upon the functions and anatomical structure of the whole soul of man.¹² Burton begins his analysis of this vital organ by assembling in order the soul's three main divisions—the vegetal, the sensible, and the rational parts. He hurriedly dismisses the vegetal part, since its functions of reproduction, growth, and nutrition are more plant-like than human. The sensible and rational parts of the soul, however, demand a good deal of his attention, for in these divisions lie the sources of human action and thought.

Burton shows the sensible soul to be highly complex. Residing deep in the brain, it encompasses the power of both apprehension and direction. The power of apprehension holds little importance for this particular study of John Ford; the power of direction, however, is significant in that it includes the power of appetite, which fairly burgeons with trouble for man. The power of appetite itself falls into three parts—natural, sensible, and voluntary—the last of which is highly important in that theoretically it controls the other two parts. But its control is theoretical only; and for this reason the natural and sensible desires,

¹² *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, pp. 10 ff.

which basically are mere animal lusts, range uncontrolled in this part of the soul. Moreover, even voluntary desires, which are concupiscible and irascible, lie outside the range of man's choice and free will. Concupiscible desires, for example, are governed by good or bad objects. Hence, should the concupiscible part of voluntary appetites covet a good object, happiness and unbounding joy follow; but should this part light on an object of evil, crime and disease inevitably ensue. Voluntary desires are therefore controlled by the objects they covet, and it becomes evident that no part of the sensible soul can be governed by man. Burton himself, though he employed the term *voluntary*, realized this to be true in his concluding remarks on concupiscible and irascible desires:

All affections and perturbations arise out of these two fountains, which although the *Stoicks* make light of, we hold natural, and not to be resisted.¹³

Burton thus argues that the sensible soul governs the life of man. Nevertheless, a third main division exists—the rational soul, which nominally wields power over the sensible and vegetal parts. This power, however, is rarely if ever exerted; in fact, confusion lies so thick on this part of the soul that philosophers have been unable to agree upon its real nature and function. Perhaps this confusion grew from thorny questions of free will in a world mechanistically made, as Burton is to indicate later. Whatever the reason, the rational soul at his hands receives meager description, except for its two powers of apprehending and moving. Of these the first promotes conscience in man, and the second directs man to do evil or good, which, alas, laments Burton, is quite different from mere comprehension. Such considerations of ethical choice lead Burton into a morass of theological discussion. It is easy to believe, argues Burton, that “our will is free in respect

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

of vs, and things contingent"; but he quickly escapes from the slough into which he has fallen by calling on God to support the mechanical structure which the doctrine of humours had thus far erected. Speaking of these "things contingent" (which possibly refer to the physical nature of man and his world), he finds that "howsoever in respect of Gods determinate counsell, they are ineuitable and necessary."¹⁴ Thus, after this narrow escape from the unending depths of theological debate, Burton again finds himself on the familiar grounds of necessity. The rational soul, he contends, as well as the vegetal and sensible soul, is a part of a great inevitable plan. His last opinions on the physiological structure of man, furthermore, reveal that he firmly believed in the mechanistic nature of the whole soul:

Those *Naturall* and *Vegetall* powers, are not commanded by *Will* at all; for *who can adde one cubite to his stature?* These other may, but are not: and thence come all those head-strong Passions, violent perturbations of the *Minde*; And many times vitious Habits, customes, ferall Diseases, because we giue so much way to our *Appetite*, and follow our inclination, like so many beasts. The principall *Habits* are two in number, *Vertue* and *Vice*, whose peculiar Definitions, Descriptions, Differences, and kindes, are handled at large in the *Ethicks*, and are indeed the subiect of *Morall Philosophie*.¹⁵

Thus man's organs control his whole life, even his habits of virtue and vice; and as a corollary to this basic assumption crime becomes, not a moral, but a physical problem.

Indeed, the whole doctrine finds meaning in its emphasis upon the physical basis of life. Like chemical compounds, the organs and humours either harmoniously mix or react to each other. The soul, for instance, determines whether man shall be sanguine or sour, ruddy or pale, evil or good, abounding in health or racked with disease.

¹⁴ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 29.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

Should the soul be constituted so as to keep the four humours in proper proportion, health and happiness follow; but should the soul upset the nice balance, disease and evil ensue. Moreover, these four humours inherited at birth and diffused through the blood often themselves passively work on man's soul and encourage the release of unbridled passions—a reciprocal action which tends to disturb the balance of humours to an even greater degree. Thus a vicious circle of cause and effect is created. But this hardly means that the soul always directs man into paths of sickness and crime. Often the soul, through no fault of its own, allows just enough disproportion of humours to clothe man in habits which, added together, make up his "character." A slight overbalance of blood, for example, may make man temperate and sanguine; on the other hand, an overbalance of choler is likely to produce quick temper and guile. But whatever man's state, all is determined; whatever he is or hopes to become is the result of a formula not of his making.

A further example of how this chemistry works will indicate the basically material nature of the four-humours doctrine. Should the humours be kept in proper proportion, all parts of man's body run smoothly and his mind as a result is serene. But should appetites flame in the soul, his humours very likely will burn, leaving, because of this process, a sort of residual ash, properly called by the doctrine "melancholy adust." This "adust" in turn causes the body to fall into all kinds of distempers. To be specific, should concupiscible desires in the sensible soul covet a beautiful woman, flames in his soul will burn his humours to ash; this ash, in turn, will cause disorders of body and often bring on death and destruction. Moreover, all humours are thus prone to adustion; and, burnt in mixtures, they may produce black jaundice, quartan ague, leprosy, scurvy, and other diseases. Such chemistry as this makes it impossible for anyone to escape the mech-

anistic reactions of his body and soul; and it is just this sort of crude chemistry, pointing not to the nice balance of humours but to unpleasant results, that Burton so fully describes:

This *Melancholy* of which we are to treat, is an Habit, *morbus soticus* or *Chronicus*, a Chronicke or continue disease, a setled humor, as *Aurelianus*, and others cal it, not errant but fixed, and as it was long encreasing, so now being (pleasant, or painfull) growne to an habit, it will hardly be remoued.¹⁶

A main function of the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, in fact, is to disclose the physiological reasons for the unfortunate and often ludicrous state of man.

Such a clinical approach to the moral and physical ills of mankind is in every sense modern. But not only this: such an approach gave rise to an analytical system of cause and effect which still obtains in the medical world. Both in spirit and in analytical method, the *Anatomy of Melancholy* may be favorably compared to Sir William Osler's *Modern Medicine*.

III

The *Anatomy of Melancholy* attempts to encompass all untoward behavior within an analytical system of cause and effect. The first partition of this volume deals with causes and symptoms of mental and physical ills; the second partition deals chiefly with cures; the third partition describes love-melancholy, jealousy, and religious melancholy—three diseases which, it appears, demand separate treatment. In these partitions Burton considers nearly all diseases known at that time and arranges them systematically according to a strict scheme of cause and effect. Any one disease, therefore, thus treated at length, could serve to exemplify the mechanical formula which permeates the whole book. It seems fitting, however, to select

¹⁶ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, pp. 12-13.

Burton's treatment of love-melancholy, not only because here Burton appears at his wittiest best but also because John Ford himself seemed profoundly affected by the causes, symptoms, effects, and cures of this disturbing disease.

Burton prefaces his anatomy of love-melancholy by connecting the disease with definite parts of the soul and by describing its extent and general power. First, he explains that love-melancholy, or "heroical love,"¹⁷ springs from the sensible soul; it is, in fact, a concupiscible desire which, overruling the rational soul, leads to unfortunate and even prodigious events:

The Sensitiue faculty most part ouer rules reason, the Soule is carried hoodwinked, and the vnderstanding captiue like a beast. *The Heart is variously inclined, sometimes they are merry, sometimes sad, and from loue arise Hope and Feare, Iealousie, Fury, Desparation.*¹⁸

Now this sensitive faculty which thus hoodwinks reason may yearn for many divers and sundry objects.¹⁹ In gluttons, for example, it may fix upon dishes, in epicureans upon sensual pleasures, in misers upon silver and gold; in others, it may lead to virtue, honesty, and good report. But these appetites growing out of the sensitive faculty merely show the extent of love and may be considered preliminary to Burton's primary interest. For Burton centers his attention in that desire aroused by "comeliness and beauty"²⁰ in woman, that appetite which so flames that man is often brought to disease and destruction. He admits, to be sure, that marriage often keeps such desires under control; but woe to the man who dotes on a beautiful woman and finds his passion unsatisfied! Passions

¹⁷ See J. L. Lowes, "The Loveres Maladye of Heroes," *Modern Philology*, XI (1914), 491-546, for a complete discussion of the medical term, "heroical love."

¹⁸ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 385.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 385 ff.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 401 ff.

flame in his soul, his humours adust, and his body is soon racked with such violent diseases that he is no longer a responsible being. In a sweeping description Burton paints the power of this desire and enumerates its effects upon the physiology of man:

It subverts kingdomes, ouerthrowes citties, townes, families, marres, corrupts, and makes, a massacre of men; thunder and lightning, warres, fires, plagues, haue not done that mischief to mankind, as this burning lust, this brutish passion . . . Besides those daily monomachies, murders, effusion of blood, rapes, riot and immoderate expence, to satisfie their lusts, beggery, shame, losse, torture, punishment, disgrace, loathsome diseases that proceed from thence, worse then calentures & pestilent feauers, those often Gouts, Pox, *Artheritis*, palsies, crampes, *Sciatica*, convulsions, aches, combustions, &c. which torment the body, that ferall melancholy, which crucifies the Soule in this life, and everlastingly torments in the world to come.²¹

In addition to these unhappy effects, heroical love is likely to damage permanently the heart, brain, liver, and blood. With all this in mind, Burton therefore considers it highly desirable to examine this kind of melancholy in all its details, to

discusse it in all his kindes, to examine his severall causes, to shew his symptomes, prognosticks, effects, that so it may be with more facilitie cured.²²

To find the causes of heroical love, Burton goes to sundry authors, both ancient and modern. Some of them state that stars control heroical love; others claim that climate and air bring on this burning desire. Still others assert that southern countries, such as Spain, Greece, and Italy, promote love-melancholy to an extent unknown to nations north of the Alps. Statisticians have made estimates, for example, that some ten thousand courtesans

²¹ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 407.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 413.

dwell in Rome, Venice, and Florence alone, a deplorable number considering that the population of all three cities combined is ninety thousand or less and that, furthermore, each man living therein has his own mistress with whom he performs fornications and adulteries. How can "a man live honest amongst so many provocations?" Burton plaintively asks.²³ He then lists other causes, such as idleness, rich diet, and youth. Alcibiades, for example, fell into unfortunate dallying with young women because he indulged too frequently and excessively in "bankets."

However numerous the causes, Burton nevertheless wants it well understood that woman stands as a main source of heroical love. He argues that, from time immemorial, painters, artificers, and writers, describing the dread effects of concupiscible passion, have pointed to beauty in woman as a wellspring of love-melancholy. Take Helen of Troy, for instance. Were not the topless towers of Ilium burnt because of her beauty? But it must not be thought for a moment that facial features alone possess the power to launch thousands of ships; all parts of woman's body attract, to man's eternal destruction. Burton then winks at his readers and tells the story of a company of young, inexperienced lovers in debate as to the most pleasing and desirable part of a beautiful woman's body. Some claimed the forehead, others the teeth, still others the eyes, lips, neck, and chin; but one, much wiser than all the rest, smilingly implied that other parts might be much more delectable. Indeed, beauty attracts in every detail:

So that without doubt, there is some secret loadstone in a beautiful woman. 'Tis true indeed of naturall and chaste love, but not of this Heroicall passion, or rather brutish burning lust, of which we treat, we speak of wandring, wanton, adulterous eyes, which . . . lye still in wait, *as so many souldiers, and when they spy an innocent spectator fixed on them, shoot him through,*

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 415.

*and presently bewitch him: Especially when they shall gaze & glote, as wanton Louers doe one vpon another, & with a pleasant eye-conflict, participate each others soules.*²⁴

Natural beauty, moreover, may be enhanced by artificial allurements and clever maneuvers. Jewels, pendants, spangles, linens, laces, ointments—all may create more attraction and may make the veriest dowdy appear like a goddess. Furthermore, gestures and movements, such as courtesies, cringes, and turns of the body often inflame concupiscible desires and hence precipitate heroical love. In addition to such enticements, Burton lists "*Importunity and opportunity of time, place, conference, discourse, singing, dancing, musicke*";²⁵ and in some cases, he further explains, bawds and love philters may provoke this disease. But Burton emphasizes again and again that, however many causes may be thus assembled, youth, beauty, and idleness in court must be considered as the main inducements to heroical love:

This opportunity of time and place, with their circumstances are so forcible motiues, that it is vnpossible almost for two young folkes equall in yeares to liue together, & not be in loue, especially in great houses, Princes Courts, where they are idle *in summo gradu*, fare well, liue at ease, and cannot tell otherwise how to spend their time.²⁶

Such a summary brings to a suitable close the main causes of love-melancholy.

Burton next lists the symptoms of those afflicted with heroical love.²⁷ Fools often become wise under the influence of love, he encouragingly begins; politeness, courage, and generosity are often exercised and engendered. Sometimes those afflicted with love will cast aside timid fears and repressions, as witness Leander's braving the Hellespont in spite of the costs. Others for the sake of approval

²⁴ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 432.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 443.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 444.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 462 ff.

learn dances and songs, compose madrigals and sonnets, and invent many a witty conceit. Were the truth to be known, Burton whispers in secret, it would become increasingly patent that most arts and sciences spring from love. Unfortunately, however, the list of commendable symptoms is short; the remainder, both physical and mental, present a picture of despair and self-destruction.

Burton reminds his readers that flaming appetites in the sensible soul adust man's humours and thus cause changes in his physical nature. As a result, heroical lovers become lean, hollow-eyed, pale, and dried-up; unable to suppress the signs and symptoms of their raging disease, they lie awake at night filling the air with groans and heart-rending sighs. In short, sighing, sweating, weeping, lamenting, complaining, and blowing hard, as well as neglect of business, downcast looks, untidy clothes, and smiling in solitary places as if the afflicted one were contemplating some delectable object—all point to the disease of love-melancholy. Other symptoms, no less indicative, take on the appearance of folly. Stratocles, for example, became so passion-possessed that he could hardly eat dinner for kissing and culling. First he kissed, then he paid compliment, then he kissed and culled and paid compliment, until even Lesbia could scarcely keep count of his fervid show of outward affection. Burton winds up this group of symptoms with another example of folly. Often a man, he relates, because of his tormenting passion, finds his hands wandering in his mistress' bosom. What this disease will not force men to do is indeed not worth recording.

From here on Burton speaks in a much more serious vein, particularly as he describes the mental symptoms of love-melancholy.²⁸ He concedes that love may be merry and sweet, but insists that for the most part it is clearly a plague, a terror, a hell. For sheer torture even Spanish inquisitions pale in comparison; as St. Augustine says, love

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 468 ff.

is an unquenchable fire, from which arise "*biting cares, perturbations, passions, sorrowes, feares, suspitions, discontentes, contentions, discords, warres, treacheries, enmities, flattery, cosening, riot, lust, impudence, cruelty, knauery, &c.*"²⁹ The chief symptoms, however, are sorrow and fear. When a lover's mistress smiles on him, transported for joy, he shouts "O happy day!" and Persian kings seem no more jovial than he. But soon his mood changes; his mistress frowns; and, in the fear that she may eventually leave him, sorrow presses like lead on his mind. Another main symptom is pain. The King of Babylon, Burton explains, bent on punishing a courtier for allowing his love to range above his station in life, upon casting about to find a fit torture for this upstart young lover was convinced that to let him love without due consummation would promote the sharpest pain he could hope to inflict. Numerous other examples point out the extent of the mental symptoms of love:

So that to say truth, as *Castilio* describes it. *The beginning, middle, ende of loue is naught else but sorrow, vexation, torment, irksomenesse, wearisomenes, so that to be squalid, vgly, miserable, solitary, discontent, deieted, to wish for death, to complaine, raue, and to be peeuish, are the certaine signes, and ordinary actions of a loue-sicke person.*³⁰

The effects of love-melancholy are as violent as Burton's analysis of its symptoms suggests.³¹ Their rational souls overcome, heroic lovers fall to the level of beasts, taking on the appearance of dogs, asses, and hogs; slave to the appetite which they hold in common with animals, they hotly pursue lust even though their mistresses be wrinkled, bald, goggle-eyed, hook-nosed, sparrow-mouthed, lave-eared, or splay-footed. Moreover, if they have hopes of attaining their ends they will spend themselves, their

²⁹ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 468.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 474.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 496 ff.

goods, and their fortunes; though they be cast off, disinherited, utterly undone, disgraced, they will beg, hazard all goods, lands, fame, scandal, and life itself for their mistresses' sweet sake. Their humours adusted, they often run stark mad because of the inflammation which ascends to the brain:

For such men ordinarily as are thoroughly possessed with this humour, become *insensati & insani*, for it is *amor insanus*, as the Poet calls it, beside themselves, and as I haue proued, no better then beasts, irrationall, stupid, head-strong, void of feare of God or men, they frequently forswear themselves, spend, steale, commit incests, rapes, adulteries, murders, depopulate Townes, Citties, Countries, to satisfie their lust.³²

To observe the worst effects of heroical love, go to Bedlam, Burton advises; here reside those who because of unruly passion daily attempt murder and suicide. To clinch his point Burton illustrates the effects of heroical love by telling several tales of those specifically ailing. A possessed barber in Frankfort, upon seeing his sweetheart promised to another young man, unceremoniously cut his own throat; a young gentleman living in Neoburge, failing to get the consent of his loved one's father and mother, killed his mistress and then himself gave up the ghost; a widow of Athens, for love of a Venetian, betrayed her own city and he for her sake murdered his own loving wife. Furthermore, history describes numerous lovers who have been led into prodigious actions because of their unruly desires; to please Thais, for example, Alexander set Persepolis afire. Such are the effects, or the "Acts & Scenes" as Burton would have it, of heroical love.

The next section of Burton's analysis lists panaceas and cures; for happily, if taken in time, heroical love may be eased and sometimes expelled.³³ In view of this, Burton

³² *Ibid.*, p. 496.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 499 ff.

records with many supporting examples the popular therapies for love-melancholy, cures which citizens in the seventeenth century no doubt knew and with great faith applied. He places high on the list "syrop of helebor," which once soothed a young Jew mad for love; next he advises the letting of blood, which sometimes serves as a cooling card for passionate young lovers. But better than herbals and surgery are diet and exercise, for records reveal that rich foods and idleness often cause love to rage uncontrolled. Burton therefore advises the avoidance of sweet wines, mutton, and "pottage," substituting for these heavy liquids and foods light fare such as melons and lettuce; in addition to this, should the disease continue to grow, he suggests bowling, hunting, fishing, or any form of exertion until sweat drips from the body. Sometimes, he continues, a long trip will serve as a cure, since new scenes turn the mind away from the tortures of heroical love.

Burton insists that heroical love is so serious that all means, both fair and foul, should be taken to cure it.³⁴ Scruple not to tell lies, should the situation demand it, he advises. To dissuade a young woman from the paths of love-melancholy, for example, shout that her lover is no doubt a eunuch or that he is a very whoremaster, a drunkard, a leper; make it clear that he cannot hold his water and that he will probably stab his bedfellow at night. To cool off a young man mad with love, report that his mistress has caught the pox or mayhap has the gout, or that she is a slut possessing many secret infirmities. If his passion still flames, let him see a fat, lumpy woman stark naked. Most people, concludes Burton, favorably react to such treatment; but, if such measures fail, the door to recovery is not by any means closed. Let some fatherly person, whom the patient respects, give wise and select counsel to turn the victim away from the paths of heroical love. Such advice, if well given, should convince the diseased

³⁴ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, pp. 503 ff.

one of the imperfections and discontents of heroical love and thus should lead to his cure.

The best cure of love-melancholy, however, is marriage. On this point Burton is certain and clear. Many a person, wasted away with fevers and sweats, fully recovers after wedding bells ring:

When you haue all done, saith *Avicenna*, *there is no speedier or safer course, then to ioyn the parties together according to their desires and wishes, the custome and forme of loue, and so we haue seene him quickly restored to his former health, that was languished away to skinne and bones, after his desire was satisfied, his discontent ceased, and we thought it strange, our opinion is therefore, that in such cases Nature is to be obeyed.*³⁵

So strong is Burton's belief in this cure that he concludes his analysis of love-melancholy with a resounding epithalamium:

Since then this of marriage, is the last and best refuge, and cure of Heroicall loue, all doubts are cleared, and impediments remoued; I say againe, what remaines, but that according to both their desires, they bee happily ioyned, since it cannot otherwise be helped. If all parties be pleased, aske their Banes, 'tis a match And although they haue hardly past the pikes, through many difficulties and delayes brought the match about, yet let them take this of *Aristænetus* (that so marry) for their comfort: *After many troubles and cares, the marriages of louers are more sweet and pleasant.*³⁶

Marriage thus quenches the passions, relieves the body of pain, and directs the course of man's life into happier channels.

Yet Burton knows and makes some point of the fact that the efficacious therapy of marriage cannot always be applied. Custom and traditional law often prevent couples from joining in love; and, when such circumstances obtain,

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 524.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 536.

heroical lovers are caught on the horns of a moral dilemma. Either they die because of unsatisfied love, or indulge their passion and live in shame and disgrace. As Burton put it:

Sometimes both parties themselves are not agreed, Parents, Tutors, Masters, Guardians, will not give consent; Lawes, Customes, Statutes hinder: poverty, superstition, feare & suspicion: many men dote on one woman, *semel & simul*, she dotes as much on him, or them, and in modesty must not, cannot wooe, dare not make it knowne, shew her affection, or speake her minde. And *hard is the choice* (as it is in *Euphues*) *when one is compelled either by silence to dye with griefe, or by speaking to live with shame.*³⁷

In this clash of necessity and of traditional ethics Burton questions a moral code whose statutes militate against health or even against life itself, and suggests that old moral penalties work grave injustices against those afflicted with heroical love. He believed the cure of disease to be more important than the strict observance of custom, and as a result he viewed moral defection with calm clinical eyes.

This analysis of heroical love illustrates pretty clearly Burton's conception of the way the life of man is determined by the immutable laws of cause and effect. Other sections of the *Anatomy of Melancholy* show the same laws at work. Despite Burton's antiquated methods of citing authority and his stories in dubious taste, both of which would be disapproved in serious scientific works of today, Burton nevertheless fulfilled the aim of science in his age and of science now in that he reduced all human phenomena to a mechanistic system of cause and effect. In so doing, however grievous his faults, he contributed to the belief in scientific determinism which had begun to flourish in his day and presented a philosophy which has become a motivating force in modern life.

³⁷ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, pp. 524-25.

IV

Ford composed the bulk of his drama with his eyes steadfastly focused upon the seventeenth-century doctrine of passions. He copied whole sections almost verbatim from the four-humours theory and so absorbed the idea of determinism that his plays are exemplifications of the formula of cause and effect. If no barrier arose in the treatment of melancholic diseases, for example, comedy followed; but if custom and law hindered the application of appropriate cures, tragedy of necessity ensued. As a consequence tragedy arose from the clash of scientific necessity and the demands of traditional law, a conflict replete with dilemmas which John Ford tried to resolve on the boards of the Caroline stage.

Ford's attempt to resolve such dilemmas may await later discussion. First the details of his debt to the doctrine must be made clear—a task arduous and sometimes prosaic. This debt may be revealed best by pointing out definite passages which Ford drew from the *Anatomy of Melancholy* itself and by then showing how the spirit of Burton pervades his dramas, from character conception to basic philosophy.

Fortunately, no time need be wasted in proving John Ford's direct relation to seventeenth-century science; for in *The Lover's Melancholy* he admits acquaintance with Burton. In this play Ford includes the specific direction, "*Vid. Democrit. Iunior*";³⁸ and in the text close beside this injunction lies a definition of melancholy lifted from the pages of Burton:

Melancholy

Is not as you conceiue. Indisposition
Of body, but the mindes disease. So Extasie,
Fantastick Dotage, Madnesse, Phrenzey, Rupture,

³⁸ *The Lover's Melancholy*, in Bang's edition, *John Fordes Dramatische Werke*, I. 1255.

Of meere imagination differ partly
 From *Melancholy*, which is briefly this,
 A meere commotion of the minde, o'er-charg'd
 With feare and sorrow; first begot i'th'braine,
 The Seate of Reason, and from thence deriu'd
 As suddenly into the Heart, the Seate
 Of our Affection.³⁹

Ford's printed direction points to Partition I, Section I, Member 3, Subsections 1 and 2—divisions separately entitled "*Definition of Melancholy, Name, Difference*" and "*Of the part affected. Affection. Parties affected.*" Portions of these sections read as follows:

The *summum genus* is *Dotage*, or *Anguish of the minde*, saith *Areteus*, to distinguish it from Cramp and Palsie, and such diseases as belong to the outward Sense and motions (*depraved*) to distinguish it from Folly and Madnesse (*without an ague*) is added by all, to sever it from *Phrensie*, and that *Melancholy*, which is in a pestilent Feauer. (*Feare and Sorrow*) make it differ from *Madnesse* (*without a cause*) is lastly inserted to specifie it from all other ordinary passions of *Feare and Sorrow*. Wee properly call that *Dotage*, *when some one principall facultie of the minde, as Imagination, or reason is corrupted, as all Melancholy persons haue* *Feare and Sorrow* are the true Characters, and inseparable companions of most *Melancholy*

[B]ut for as much as this malady is caused by precedent *Imagination*, with the *Appetite*, to whom Spirits obey, and are subject to those principall parts: the *Braine* must needs primarily be misaffected, as the seat of *Reason*, and then the *Heart*, as the seat of *Affection*.⁴⁰

Even had Ford not been so honest as to leave a clue, hunters of parallel passages in the fullness of time would have searched out this similarity.

In the same play appears a "Masque of Melancholy,"

³⁹ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1250-60.

⁴⁰ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, pp. 30-32.

a sort of mousetrap device similar to Hamlet's; and here too appear lines copied *in toto* from the pages of Burton. Corax, a court physician, in an attempt to discover the affliction of Prince Palador, devises a crude pantomime of mental diseases, the descriptions of which he found in the *Anatomy of Melancholy*. As he directs the pantomime, he refers many times to a "Paper-plot" close by, an indication, in view of Ford's earlier injunction to examine Democritus Junior, that here possibly lay excerpts from the *Anatomy* itself. At any rate, he hands a sheet of paper to Palador, stating in effect that here is the source of the mask which now moves before them:

Hold and obserue the plot, tis there exprest
In kind, what shall be now exprest in action.⁴¹

As Palador holds and observes, Burton's abstract descriptions of "Diseases of the Mind" spring into life, represented by various members of Palador's court. Rhetias commences the pantomime by representing Lycanthropia, called "wolf-madness" by a few medical men. He enters the stage with appropriate makeup, his face "whited," his hair "shag," his nails long. "Bow, Bow, wow, wow," he first barks, clutching a piece of raw meat; then, abandoning his canine behavior, he speaks of being turned into a wolf, a metamorphosis which has forced him to bark, howl, and dig up graves in the night. Furthermore, he continues, he often travels to churchyards to sup at the moon's dark eclipse.⁴² After this rather startling display, Corax turns to Palador and points to the paper-plot with apparent medical zeal:

This kind is called, *Lycanthropia*, Sir,
When men conceiue themselues Wolues.⁴³

Obviously looking at the plot, Palador answers with a non-

⁴¹ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1574-75.

⁴² *Ibid.*, ll. 1580 ff.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, ll. 1588-89.

committal: "Here I finde it."⁴⁴ If Palador found "it" in Burton, he read this:

Lycanthropia, which *Avicenna* calls *Cucubuth*, others *Lupinam insaniam*, or Wolfe madnesse, when men runne howling about graues and fields in the night, and will not be perswaded but that they are Wolues or some such beasts *Forestus* was an eye-witnesse, at *Alemar* in *Holland*, a pore Husband-man that still haunted about graues, and kept in Churchyards, of a pale, blacke, vgly, and fearefull looke. . . . They lye hid most part all day, and goe abroad in the night, barking, howling, at graues and deserts⁴⁵

Pelias, wearing a crown of feathers "*Antickly*" rich, next steps on the stage. A mad dog has bitten him, he explains to his audience; therefore hydrophobia makes him run mad. Then, in imagination taking over the powers of emperor, he orders that all looking-glasses be smashed and that mere mention of the word "water" be deemed treason by statute. At this point he stops short and ungallantly shouts that his wife is "a whore, a whore, a whore." During this mad display Palador had apparently kept his eyes glued on the plot; for, looking up, he asks, "*Hydrophobia* terme you this?" Corax seems to nod "Yes," and comments:

And men possest so, shun all sight of water:
Sometimes, if mixt with iealousie, it renders them
Incurable, and oftentimes brings death.⁴⁶

Again, if Palador had Burton before him he found this:

Hydrophobia, is a kinde of madnesse, well knowne in euery Village, which comes by the biting of a mad dogge, . . . the parties affected, cannot endure the sight of water: or any liquor, supposing still they see a mad dogge in it . . . they begin to raue; flye water, and glasses . . . to see strange Visions⁴⁷

⁴⁴ *The Lover's Melancholy*, l. 1590.

⁴⁵ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 9.

⁴⁶ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1603-5.

⁴⁷ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, pp. 9-10.

It is to be noticed that Burton says nothing of the lethal mixture of hydrophobia and jealousy, a bit of information which must have arisen from Corax' own medical lore; but, since Ford for some reason makes the physician seem at times highly incompetent, perhaps this divergence lends a special point of characterization.

A philosopher, book in hand and raggedly gowned, next walks into view. Babbling nonsense about dwelling in the moon, dancing in the pit, and defying the beast, he issues a long flow of words completely empty of meaning. "*Delirium*" this is called, expounds Corax,

which is meere dotage,
Sprung from Ambition first, and singularity,
Selfe loue, and blind opinion of true merit,⁴⁸

to which Palador responds cryptically: "I not dislike the course."⁴⁹ Whether he referred to the mad philosopher's part or to Burton is never made clear, but he would have found this in the *Anatomy* by the marginal direction, "*Delirium Dotage*":

Dotage; Fatuity, or Folly, is a common name to all the following Species, as some will haue it If it be distinguished from them, it is, *naturall* or *ingenite*, which comes by some defect of the Organs, and ouer-moist Braine, as wee see in our common fooles; and is for the most part intended or remitted in particular men, and therevpon some are wiser then other: or else it is acquiseite, an Appendix or Symptome of some other disease, which comes or goes; or if it continue, a signe of *Melancholy* it selfe.⁵⁰

The old philosopher's language and antics indicate that he suffered not only from a brain "ouer-moist" but possibly from water upon it.

Maskers continue to enter, for as yet Corax has been unable to diagnose Palador's melancholic affliction. Attired in a rich gown, her ensemble complete with ruff,

⁴⁸ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1614-16.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, l. 1617.

⁵⁰ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 8.

muff, and fan, Grilla flounces in shouting clamorous nonsense, whereupon Corax, with patience of a born teacher, points to the paper-plot and makes appropriate comments: "You find this noted there, *Phrenitis*." To this explanation Palador replies merely, "True"; hence Corax feels that he must enlarge his first statement:

Pride is the ground on't;
It raignes most in women.⁵¹

And again Corax seems to have added lore of his own, for Burton's definition says nothing of women or pride:

Phrenitis, which the Greekes deriue from the word φρην, is a Disease of the Mind, with a continuall Madnesse or Dotage It differs from *Melancholy* and *Madnesse*, because their dotage is without an ague: this continuall, with waking, or Memory decayed &c. *Melancholy* is most part silent; this clamourous, and many such like differences are assigned by Physitians.⁵²

After Grilla's performance the mask approaches a climax, accompanied by song and dance. Cuculus appears singing of healths drunk in tobacco, which he designates similar to healths of "*fire, and smoake, and stench*" drunk in hell. Here other maskers break in; but Cuculus, not yet having sung out his piece, continues his act until his "*braines are a Iumbling*."⁵³ At the instant he stops, even before Corax can comment, Palador swiftly explains that this strange action represents hypochondriacal melancholy, an observation which nevertheless the physician feels must be further expanded:

[It] is a windy flattuous humour stuffing
The head, and thence deriu'd to th' animall parts
To be too ouer-curious, losse of goods,
Or friends, excesse of feare, or sorrowes cause it.⁵⁴

⁵¹ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1626-27.

⁵² *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 8.

⁵³ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1629 ff.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 1646-49.

Turning a few pages in Burton, Palador could have found Corax' phrases under the heading, "*Causes of Hypochondriacall or windie Melancholy*":

Hypochondriacall or flatuous Melancholy is most grievous and frequent His causes are inward or outward. Inward from divers parts or organs, as Midriffe, Splene, Stomack, Liver a cold stomacke and ouerhot liuer by reason of heat the blood is inflamed, and grosse vapours sent to the Heart and Braine by means of which, come crudities, obstructions, winde, rumbling griping, &c

Outward causes, are bad diet, care, griefes, discontents But most commonly feare, grieve, and some sudden commotion, or perturbation of the minde beginne it⁵⁵

This game of you-name-it-and-I'll-describe-it continues until Palador, his interest in melancholic diseases now fully aroused, begins to observe closely the symptoms of all the actors performing before him, an effect which the physician had skillfully planned.

In the last scene a sea-nymph, big-bellied with child, sings and dances her way on the stage. Cuculus soon joins her. Then with climactic abandon all shout, "A Dance, a Dance, a Dance," and they present such a strange and unusual scene that Corax again makes a clear explanation:

This is the *Wanton Melancholy*; women
With child posset with this strange fury often,
Haue danc'd three dayes together without ceasing.⁵⁶

To this Palador replies, "Tis very strange," but he apparently failed to glance at the paper-plot. Had he done so, moreover, he might not have found reference to any affliction under this name. He could have discovered, however, under *Chorus sancti Viti*, or the "lasciuious dance," descrip-

⁵⁵ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, pp. 168-69.

⁵⁶ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1665-67.

tions of women who dance until they either are cured or drop dead:

'Tis strange to heare how long they will dance, and in what manner, ouer stooles, formes, tables, even greatbellyed women sometimes (and yet neuer hurt their childe) will dance so long that they can stirre neither hand nor foot, but seeme to be quite dead Musicke aboue all things they loue, and some lusty sturdy companions to dance with them.⁵⁷

At the height of the dance all the maskers rush out in pairs, thus closing the physician's mask of melancholy, which for more than one reason seems to have been accurately named.

Now such parallel passages might merely reveal Ford's close use of Burton for parts of one of his plays. If such were the case, Ford's relation to science in the seventeenth century would be meager indeed. But this is only preliminary, a presentation of definite evidence that Ford was acquainted with Burton and that he gathered specific details from the *Anatomy of Melancholy*. Of greater importance is the fact that Ford referred often to Burton's mechanistic conception of body and soul and that he knew well the system of cause and effect. The bulk of Ford's plays exhibit this knowledge.

Even as early as his collaborating days, Ford evinced in *The Sun's Darling* a more than layman's interest in the physical nature of man. In a short skit within this moral mask, for example, in a part generally conceded to be from Ford's pen, appear the four basic elements of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth, which were considered closely analogous to the four humours of Blood, Phlegm, Choler, and Melancholy. These physical abstractions, embodied in human form after the manner of masks, are accompanied by a short explanation of how the four humours comfort and nourish the body of man:

⁵⁷ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 10.

Then shall,
 Like four straight pillars, the four Elements
 Support the goodly structure of mortality;
 Then shall the four Complexions, like four heads
 Of a clear river, streaming in his body,
 Nourish and comfort every vein and sinew.⁵⁸

In his independent plays this knowledge of the four-humours theory is even more marked. Employing terms such as *vital spirits*, *soul*, *brain*, *reason*, *blood*, and *passion*, Ford discusses with technical precision the functions of man's anatomical organs and shows the effects of unbridled desires in the sensible part of the soul. In *The Lover's Melancholy*, for example, he stresses through Palador's admonitions the need of keeping humours in their proper proportion so that the body and soul of man may function in harmonious concert:

As there is by nature
 In euery thing created contrarietie:
 So likewise is there vnity and league
 Betweene them in their kind; but *Man*, the abstract
 Of all perfection, which the workmanship
 Of Heauen hath model'd, in himselfe containes
 Passions of seuerall qualitie, the musicke
 Of mans faire composition best accords,
 When tis in consort, not in single straines.⁵⁹

Unfortunately, however, single "straines" often cause sour notes in the symphony of man's "faire composition"; and with such discords Ford seemed much more concerned.

For Ford continually refers to the power of passion and its deleterious effects upon the body and soul of man. In *The Broken Heart*, to be sure, Bassanes recognizes that man possesses a rational soul, which theoretically embodies the power to lift him above the level of beasts; but, alas, he laments, passion overcomes reason and man becomes a

⁵⁸ *The Dramatic Works of John Ford* (ed. Gifford, 1827), II, 437.

⁵⁹ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 2094-2102.

"verier" beast than the beasts.⁶⁰ As a result he loses his godlike position. In *The Lover's Melancholy*, Menaphon also complains about the inevitable power of passion. If potent princes cannot "shun/Motions of passion," he says, how can their subjects be expected to keep burdens and sorrows under control?⁶¹ Time and again Ford speaks through his characters concerning the inevitable power of passion. As "you loue your health" and "respect/ My safety, let not passion ouerrule you," declares Cleophila to Meleander;⁶² but, unfortunately, for the most part passion overcomes reason, with attendant physical and mental results. In *The Lady's Trial*, Malfato relates to Spinella, whom he has always loved, that her marriage to another has made him fall into a dotage simply because he was unable to "reduce/ The violence of passion."⁶³ Passions indeed affect body and mind in various ways: they infect the blood, causing "whorish itch" and a "leprosie" of "lust";⁶⁴ they produce "vnruely" factions of blood;⁶⁵ they "assault" the "vnguarded Castle of the mind"⁶⁶ and make "reason drunke."⁶⁷ But perhaps Velasco, in *The Queen*, states most fully the effects of passion upon him. First he draws a definite distinction between affections aimed at "chast contents" and "unruly passions of desire";⁶⁸ but the distinction apparently breaks down, for he finds himself later betrayed into actions and thoughts of dishonor:

I cannot be alone, still I am hunted
With my confounding thoughts: Too late I finde,
How passions at their best are but sly traytors
To ruin honour.⁶⁹

⁶⁰ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 1821 ff.

⁶¹ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 108-9.

⁶² *Ibid.*, ll. 1983-84.

⁶³ *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 1711 ff.

⁶⁴ *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 1723-28.

⁶⁵ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 449-51. ⁶⁶ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 1540-44.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 1072-75.

⁶⁸ *The Queen*, ll. 1437-38.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2724-30.

Such examples as these indicate clearly that Ford had a firm grasp on the four-humours doctrine, particularly in connection with the physiological relationship between the body and soul of man.

In addition Ford pauses now and then to state the Burtonian system of cause and effect, quite apart from employing that formula in dramatic construction. In *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, Romanello describes in much detail the symptoms and disturbing effects of heroical love:

I esteem of Love

As of a man in some huge place; it puzzles
Reason, distracts the freedome of the soule;
Renders a wise man foole, and a foole wise
In's owne conceit, not else it yeelds effects
Of pleasure travaile, bitter, sweet; warre, peace;
Thornes, roses; prayers, curses; longings, surfets;
Despaire, and then a rope:⁷⁰

Yet Ford fully realized that love need not end with despair and a rope, provided proper cures be applied in time. In *The Lady's Trial*, Aurelio placates Malfato with sound advice according to the four-humours theory: he may ease but hardly dispel his burning desire for beauteous Spinella by unburdening his mind to some kind adviser, a therapy forwarded by Burton himself:

A Melancholy grounded, and resolv'd,
Receiv'd into a habit, argues love,
Or deepe impression of strong discontents,
In cases of these rarities a friend
Upon whose faith, and confidence, we may
Vent with security, our grieve becomes
Oft times the best Physition, for admit
Wee finde no remedy, we cannot misse
Advise in sted of comfort, and beleeve
It is an ease, *Malfato*, to disburthen
Our soules of secret clogges, where they may finde
A rest in pittie, tho not in redresse.⁷¹

⁷⁰ *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 1404-11.

⁷¹ *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 510-21.

Here, as in the preceding examples showing the relative functions of man's body and soul, it is evident that Ford's knowledge of the doctrine of passions went far beyond that which could be obtained by hasty or half-hearted study.

It thus seems pretty clear that Ford understood the basis of the four-humours doctrine. This understanding may have been gleaned from Timothy Bright, Juan Huarte, Coeffeteau, Thomas Wright, or other moral philosophers; but Ford's specific reference to Burton suggests that the greater part of his knowledge came from the *Anatomy of Melancholy* itself. The actual source of Ford's information, however, is not of tremendous importance; the *Anatomy of Melancholy* merely sharpens the background and makes reference to the whole doctrine relatively easy. Of significance is the fact that Ford instinctively sensed a new field for the drama; he saw *pathos* if not *ethos* in characters ridden by ungovernable passion. Hence he afflicts his heroes and heroines with melancholic diseases, curable or incurable according to the laws of cause and effect. What these diseases are and how they drive their possessors into violent actions and thoughts must be also reviewed in order to show Ford's further relation to science in the seventeenth century.

V

John Ford's heroes and heroines are embodiments of definite melancholic diseases. Few characters sound of body and mind appear in his plays; few scenes lend themselves to normal human relations such as abound in the best plays of Shakespeare. No Falstaff, for example, arises to fight a long hour by the Shrewsbury clock; no Hotspur plucks honor from the pale-faced moon; no storm breaks on the moor. Instead, beautiful women and amorous men, dwelling idly within four walls of a court, shred their hearts over passion and attribute the sad course of

their lives to fate. Moreover, all this takes place in countries south of the Alps, such as Parma, Cyprus, Pavy, Aragon, Siena, Genoa, and Sparta—those districts, according to Burton, prone to entertain concupiscible passion. Even the characters themselves realize fully the nature of their environment. Corax, for example, is irked by the infecting surfeit and sloth of the court and asks indefinite leave from it so that he may better pursue his profession;⁷² Bassanes fears that a “whorson Court-ease,” which he describes as a “temptation/ To a rebellion in the veines,” will drive Ithocles into incest with Penthea;⁷³ Bufo, in *The Queen*, paints a situation which obtains in nearly all of Ford’s plays where the settings lie in hot, southern countries:

This same whorson Court diet, cost, lodging, change of clothes, and ease, have addicted me villanously to the itch of concupiscence.⁷⁴

Thus it is not strange, according to the doctrine of humours, that Ford’s characters are pathological cases; indeed, their circumstances almost forbid their escaping the rigors of heroical love. Their environment, however, in no way precludes the development of other diseases; in fact, in this atmosphere so congenial to the inception of heroical love both sorrow and jealousy flourish. But the main point is that Ford’s interest in mental and physical ailments never flagged; with scientific precision he patiently traced the sources and listed the symptoms of his main characters’ melancholic diseases. Because of this interest, he observed his heroes and heroines both in evil and in good as pathological, not as ethical, cases.

Ford’s interest in the pathological state of his characters is revealed in his first play of importance. In *The Lover’s Melancholy*, Meleander suffers from sorrow;

⁷² *The Lover’s Melancholy*, ll. 618–22.

⁷³ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 854–55. ⁷⁴ *The Queen*, ll. 1023–27.

accordingly, Ford points out the sources and painstakingly lists the main symptoms of this specific affliction. The unfortunate victim, it seems, has lost his office, his good name, and his favorite daughter through the machinations of a perfidious king; as a consequence he is forced into a habit of grief which soon develops into sorrow-melancholy, whose symptoms are already apparent in the first part of the play. As the action progresses, Meleander exhibits symptoms of increasing intensity; he groans,⁷⁵ stares,⁷⁶ raves,⁷⁷ dotes,⁷⁸ and presages actions of "violent extremity."⁷⁹ Furthermore, Rhetias, his old court friend, observes that he "chafes hugely," "fumes like a stew-pot," and rhetorically queries, "Is he not monstrously ouergone in frenzy?"⁸⁰ So evident are the outward effects of Meleander's affliction that even his servant openly speaks of his master's rude and ungentlemanly actions:

My Lord thunders: euey word that
comes out of his mouth, roares like a Cannon:⁸¹

and later he comments that his lordship "vapours" and "struts."⁸² Once, in an extreme fit of distraction, Meleander rushes madly about, wildly waving a poleaxe.⁸³

However clear these symptoms may be, Ford is not content to let the case rest on this evidence alone; he points out that such raving and roaring spring from disorders of body and mind. "I am leane/ And falne away extremely," Meleander says of himself; "most assuredly/ I haue not dyn'd these three dayes."⁸⁴ Somewhat later he admits that he is "franticke" and that "throngs of rude diuisions huddle on,/ And doe disranke" his "braines from peace, and sleepe."⁸⁵ Driven by disease and running rapidly to

⁷⁵ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 962 ff.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, l. 1010.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 1052 ff.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 1087.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1048-49.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 1814-15.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1838-40.

⁸² *Ibid.*, l. 1853.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, ll. 1857 ff.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 1003-5.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1910-12.

confusion, he had earlier contemplated death by self-destruction, which he designates the quickest and easiest cure for any affliction, including "the Goute,/ The stone, yes and the *Melancholy* deuill";⁸⁶ but for some reason he never carries out this threat. Instead, he relieves his mind by describing his grief, which no medical art seems able to cure.⁸⁷ Now so clear are these symptoms that from a seventeenth-century point of view it is almost unnecessary for Ford to name the affliction; yet, so that no doubt may remain, Ford allows Corax to explain the disease fully:

Rhetias, tis not a madnesse, but his sorrow's
Close griping griefe, and anguish of the soule
That torture him: he carries Hell on earth
Within his bosome, 'twas a Princes tyranny
Caus'd his distraction⁸⁸

The physician's clear statement at least prevents any confusion from later arising.

Perhaps Corax could be so definite and clear because his paper-plot, which he had earlier referred to in presenting the mask, was in reality the *Anatomy of Melancholy* and hence contained the details of Meleander's disease. At any rate, Burton lists the causes and symptoms which Meleander so definitely embodies. Sorrow, states Burton, is caused from the "remembrance of some disgrace, losse, iniury, abuse, &c.,"⁸⁹ which, haunting the mind, soon brings on mental and physical symptoms. Those suffering from this disease no sooner awake than they review their terrible and troublesome dreams, which beget "fretting, chafing, sighing, grieuing, complaining[,] finding faults, repining, grudging, weeping."⁹⁰ "Concoction" being hindered by such actions, the heart refrigerates, thickening the blood until victims become "weary of their

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 1892-93.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 2481-84.

⁸⁹ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 175.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 1816-20.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

liues, cry out, howle and roare for very anguish of their soules";⁹¹ these violent actions, furthermore, both spring from and bring on many disorders of body and mind. As the disease deepens, "*It dries vp the bones, . . . makes them hollow-eyed, pale, and leane, furrow-faced, to haue dead looks, wrinkled browes, riuelled cheeks . . .*"⁹² Appetite, sleep, and peace of mind vanish, until in desperation sufferers like Meleander long for death and oblivion. In short, sorrow is

*a cruell torture of the soule, a most inexplicable griefe, a poysoned worme, consuming body and soule, and gnawing the very heart, a perpetuall executioner, continuall night, profound darknesse, a whirlwind, a tempest, an ague not appearing, heating worse then any fire, and a battle that hath no end: It crucifies worse then any Tyrant, no torture, no strappado, no bodily punishment is like vnto it.*⁹³

These causes and symptoms are so close to those Meleander embodied that Corax must have made use of Burton's analysis; whatever his shortcomings as a physician—Rhetias considered him a quack doctor through the first part of the play—Corax at least made no mistake here.

Meleander thus presents a clear pathological case; the full treatment accorded him attests Ford's interest in the seventeenth-century doctrine of passions. But despite this great interest, Ford scarcely mentions sorrow again except in Meleander's carefully planned cure, which may await later analysis. Ford seemed chiefly attracted by triangle scenes, where love grew hot and diseased; he sympathized with his heroes and heroines in their attempt to solve romantic dilemmas in a medical world. As a consequence the plays of Ford live and move with victims of jealousy and of heroic love, two diseases which literally shape the course of his characters' lives.

⁹¹ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 89.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

The extent to which Ford clothed his characters in these two diseases will become evident only after an examination of Burton's descriptions of jealousy. This examination need not be complete, for Burton's formula has already been seen; moreover, love and jealousy are so much alike that their causes and symptoms often run parallel courses. Jealousy, for example, usually appears subsequent to marriage, whereas heroic love usually precedes it. Furthermore, both diseases flourish in hot Mediterranean countries, Italy alone supporting more jealous husbands than Germany drunkards or France effeminate dancers.⁹⁴ This thought leads Burton into a characteristically witty remark, tinged with a bit of patriotism. "*England*," he says, "is a Paradise for women, an hell for horses; *Italy* a paradise of horses, hell for women. . . ."⁹⁵ The horses have no connection with Ford's delineation of character, but subsequent scenes reveal that jealousy promotes a good deal of "hell for women."

Other causes of jealousy arise from physical defects, among which impotence stands first and foremost. When an honest man, hurting no one yet unable to perform those rites due his wife, observes his spouse becoming clamorous and more prone to lust than he thinks she should, what is more natural than to believe that she seeks satisfaction elsewhere?⁹⁶ Moreover,

If her husband cannot play the man, some other shall, they will leaue no remedies vnassaied, and therevpon the goodman growes icialous⁹⁷

Barrenness in the wife, sometimes the natural result of a husband's physical defect, also stands as a prime cause of jealousy. This unfortunate situation is so closely linked with the first that the two may be taken together. Side

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 543.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 544.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 544-45.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 548.

by side with these causes should be placed unusual beauty in woman; indeed, the oldest records of history reveal how beautiful women have aroused jealousy in man. For example, says Burton, was not even Abraham jealous of his wife because she was fair?⁹⁸ But the causes of jealousy, like those of love-melancholy, are too numerous to list in the fullness of Burton's detail; it is sufficient to say that in courts where beauties and gallants exchange glances and unseemly gestures jealousy inevitably breeds.

The symptoms of jealousy are even more severe than those of heroical love. Such a statement may appear rather startling, in view of the tortures of love-melancholy; but Burton is full of assurances that jealousy attunes suffering to "an higher straine." Just how high this strain is may be judged by allowing Burton to speak at some length for himself:

'Tis a more vehement passion, a more furious perturbation, a bitter paine, a fire, a pernicious curiosity, a gaule corrupting the hony of our life, madnesse, plague, hell: They are more then ordinarily disquieted, more then ordinarily suspitious. Iealousie . . . *begets vnquietnes in the mind, night and day: he hunts after every word he heares, every whisper, and amplifies it to himselfe* (as all melancholy men doe in other matters) *with a most iniust calumny of others, he misinterprets every thing is said or done, most apt to mistake and misconster*, he pryres in every corner, followes close, obserues to an haire.⁹⁹

Besides those strange gestures of staring, frowning, grinning, rolling of eyes, menacing, gastly lookes, broken pace, interrupt, precipitate, halfe turnes. Hee will sometimes sigh, weepe, sob for anger, . . . sweare and belye, slander any man, curse, threaten, brawle, scold, fight; and sometimes againe flatter, and speake faire, aske forgiuenesse, kisse, and coll, condemne his rashnesse and folly, vow, protest and sweare, he will neuer doe so againe; and then eftsoones, impatient as he is, raue, roare, &

⁹⁸ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 547.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 553.

lay about him like a mad man, . . . driue her out of dores, send her home, he will be divorced forthwith, she is a whore, &c. by and by with all submisse complement, intreat her faire, and bring her in againe, he loues her dearely, shee is his sweet, most kinde and louing wife, hee will not change, not leaue her for a kingdome; so he continues off and on, as the toy takes him, the obiect moues him, but most part brawling, fretting, vnquiet he is, accusing and suspecting not strangers onely, but Brothers and Sisters, Father, and Mother, nearest & dearest friends.¹⁰⁰

If the necessity of his busines be such, that he must goe from home, he doth either lock her vp, or cōmit her with a deale of iniunctions and protestations . . .¹⁰¹

These details have been stated verbatim not only because Burton has put them succinctly but also because Ford, in the course of his plays, embodied in the actions and thoughts of his characters nearly every symptom here referred to.

Whether Ford speaks at random through the incidental comments of his characters or whether he consciously creates completely diseased people, he seems thoroughly at home with the causes and symptoms of jealousy. In *The Fancies*, for example, Livio introduces a chance discussion of "Iealousies"¹⁰² by denying to Troylo that he could catch such a disease in the nunnery-like place in which he now lives. From here they move into a diagnosis of their great-uncle Marquesse, who, they are sure, had been rendered impotent by a "fatall breach" he suffered in a fight with the Turks. As a result he shows evidence of an "epidemical head-ach," or "Yellowes," which Troylo calls "Huge jealous fits."¹⁰³ In the same play Camillo discloses that Vespuci, whom he has eyed of late rather closely, shows symptoms of both love and jealousy:

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 553-54.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 554.

¹⁰² *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 689 ff.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, ll. 721 ff.

This will not doe, I reade it on thy forehead,
 The graine of thy complexion is quite altered.
 Once 'twas a comely browne, 'tis now of late
 A perfect greene and yellow; sure prognosticates
 Of th'over flux o'th gall, and *melancholy*,
 Symptomes of *love* and *jealousie*, poore soule.¹⁰⁴

Secco also exhibits symptoms of jealousy. Thinking his wife Morosa has crowned him with horns, he rages, bellows, and fumes until in exasperation she asks, "Are thy mad braines in thy mazar now, thou jealous Bedlam?"¹⁰⁵ Such comments, however, only meagerly indicate Ford's genuine interest in this deadly disease; his complete technical knowledge and his enthusiasm for analysis appear in characters of much more importance. These characters are Alphonso in *The Queen*, the Duke in *Love's Sacrifice*, and Bassanes in *The Broken Heart*, all of whom walk the boards as victims of this disease.

Alphonso, later king of Aragon, suffers from jealousy fostered by Muretto, a sort of courtier-physician and friend to the king. As the play opens, Alphonso's life seems drowned in "melancholy and sowre discontent";¹⁰⁶ and in order to ease this general malady, Muretto studies how Alphonso may best undergo treatment. He hits upon an ancient device, well known in the doctrine of humours: Why not drive out this general melancholy by arousing another passion, a trick as simple as pouring water into a bucket of oil to make the oil overflow at the top? Muretto's first step, therefore, is to stimulate jealousy so as to drive out Alphonso's chronic sour discontent. He begins by extolling before the whole court the Queen's beauty, which in his words outshines descriptions in all art or story; then in the same breath he whispers *sotto voce* that she may not be chaste. In words highly reminiscent of Iago's insinuations to credulous Othello, Muretto suggests

¹⁰⁴ *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 1164-69.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1858-59.

¹⁰⁶ *The Queen*, l. 448.

to King Alphonso that he search out the comings and goings of his beautiful Queen; he specifically intimates, furthermore, that Petruchi has clapped horns upon the King's head. Incredulous at first, Alphonso controls the passion surging within him; but soon, because of Muretto's devices, he jealously cries out in frustration and rage:

Monstrous woman! Beast!

Were these the fruits of her dissembling tears!

Her puling, and her heart sighs. But, *Muretto*.

I will be swift *Muretto*, swift and terrible.¹⁰⁷

His humours adusted, Alphonso now lies in the iron grip of uncontrolled passion and as a consequence begins to show mental and physical evidence that his disease is severe. He suspects the worst of the Queen's every gesture and word;¹⁰⁸ he openly proclaims her an adulteress and a lusting whore;¹⁰⁹ his "busie thoughts" press like "legions of infernal hags" to hasten his "destruction."¹¹⁰ Moreover, sleep slips from his "sunke eyes" buried deep in "their hollows." Yet, fascinated by the Queen's beauty, he continues to gaze on those perfections which seem to arouse both jealousy and heroical love:

Never henceforward shall I slumber out

One peaceful hour; my enraged blood

Turns coward to mine honour. I could wish

My Queen might live now though I did but look

And gaze upon her cheeks, her ravishing cheeks.

But, oh, to be a Cuckold; 's death, she dyes.¹¹¹

Whatever Alphonso may be contracting, it is evident that his general melancholy and sour discontent are now gone; in their place is a mixture of jealousy and heroical love, each fighting for the mastery. As this struggle continues, Alphonso becomes "distract" and falls, as Muretto reports,

¹⁰⁷ *The Queen*, ll. 1655-62.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 1667-70.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 2389-94.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2188 ff.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2495-2504.

into a "trance" which gives him the appearance of "marble."¹¹² The thought that in spite of her beauty the Queen could be an "Insatiate tempter" and a "Patern of lust" so confuses Alphonso that even his metaphors reveal the state of his mind. He will turn from the Queen, he mourns, and look at a "Basilisk," whose "murthering flames/ Of poyson" will strike him "Blinde."¹¹³ At the peak of his passion he "dotes," expressing fears that anguish of mind will hasten his death.¹¹⁴ When his disease reaches this uncontrolled state, Muretto steps in to explain that "jealousy" and "affections" wrestle within Alphonso for the mastery, a bit of information which seems purely gratuitous in view of the picture Alphonso has presented. Nevertheless, this revelation serves the definite purpose of removing all doubt concerning Muretto's plan to infect the King with the "pestilence of jealousy"¹¹⁵ and concerning the fact that Alphonso suffers from actual disease.

In *Love's Sacrifice* Ford presents a case of uncontrolled passion with symptoms even clearer than those Alphonso had displayed. Perhaps this obtains because the Duke of Pavy, the victim, contracts his disease normally, not artificially like Alphonso. Whatever the reason, the Duke soon becomes a living picture of jealousy as described in the pages of Burton. Marrying Biancha for her beauty alone he finds that this same beauty greatly heightens the degree of his jealousy when Fernando, his erstwhile friend, begins to pay secret court to his wife. At first, since he trusts both his wife and his friend, he suspects little amiss; but soon it becomes evident, chiefly to others, that these clandestine lovers are up to no good. In fact, they have already sworn vows of eternal love in the privacy of Fernando's bedroom late at night and rumors of their affair are already circulating. Picking up one of these rumors, D'Avolos, a sort of court villain, drops his sus-

¹¹² *The Queen*, ll. 2545 ff.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, ll. 2591 ff.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 2639 ff.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 3583-3605.

pitions through innocent words as he casually talks to the Duke. Still trusting, the Duke first becomes puzzled and then downright angry as D'Avolos arches his brows and continues his suggestive remarks. "Out, man, out," he commands D'Avolos, disliking his half-spoken meanings, his "*Buts*," his "*wel's, if all were knowne*";¹¹⁶ but when D'Avolos reveals that apparently Fernando has made him a cuckold, the Duke begins to lose control of his will. "*Villaine*," "viper," "hell of hels," he rages, his incipient passion pointing to what becomes later a well-settled disease.

The Duke continues in this unhappy vein. Later, when Fiormonda observes his "distractions," she suggests to Fernando with an evident irony that the Duke suffers from spleen caused by several court parasites. Though misstating the causes, she nevertheless begins to recognize the symptoms of what ails the Duke. Never "out of report" or out of "warranted description," she continues, has she detected

The nature of phantasticke Iealousie,
If not in him.¹¹⁷

What Fiormonda detected was accurate enough according to the "warranted description" of Burton, for soon the Duke begins to enact what the *Anatomy of Melancholy* described. According to the formula of jealousy, the Duke accuses his wife of being unchaste; at the same time, in a tempest of savagery, he threatens her life:

I haue a sword ('tis here) should make my way
Through fire, through darknesse, death, and all
To hew your lust ingendred flesh to shreds,
Pound you to mortar, cut your throats, and mince
Your flesh to mites.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 1722 ff.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 2151-54.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 2242-46.

Before such violent threats Biancha flinches, crying mercy and proclaiming her innocence; and the Duke, taken aback by her apparent sweet blamelessness, grows suddenly calm and admits in honeyed words that distractions make him brandish his sword thus. Confessing that he is mad, he now seeks Biancha's forgiveness; it seems, he explains carefully to her, that he walks in a dream only to dream anew. Therefore, because of "these diuisions" and this "Sickness," he imagines events which he knows are impossible yet which somehow appear to be true.¹¹⁹ In thus making it clear that his rude accusations grew out of a physical illness, he not only hopes to exonerate himself but also yearns to win back Biancha's respect and affection. This revealing scene closes with the Duke in a contemplative mood; perhaps the healthful waters of Lucca, he muses, will hold the cure for his violent affliction.

But the Duke never bathes in the healthful waters of Lucca; instead, he lays a trap and catches the clandestine lovers. When he sees them together pledging vows of eternal love, his passions flame to such a degree that almost at once he stabs Biancha to death. Fernando escapes but later meets death by his own hand. In view of the circumstances it is with a good deal of irony that Nibrassa sounds a grave warning after the trap has been sprung that the "distemper'd"¹²⁰ Duke, being a "j[e]alous mad man," might in "his fury,/Offer her some violence,"¹²¹ a fear which of course only mildly describes what actually happened. After such violent actions, the Duke commits that last deadly deed characteristic of uncontrolled passion: he makes away with himself, imploring that somehow his deed may create a sanguine libation for the purpose of reminding all husbands how jealousy may lead to destruction:

¹¹⁹ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 2262-67.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 2284-85. This is Petruchi's term, not Nibrassa's.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2567-69.

oh that these thicke streames
 Could gather head, and make a standing poole,
 That jealous husbands here might bathe in blood.¹²²

His actions, his own admission, and the descriptions of others leave no doubt as to the nature of Pavy's affliction.

However clear the Duke's pathological case, Bassanes' disease stands out in even greater detail; in fact, here in *The Broken Heart* Ford has created perhaps the most jealous husband in Caroline drama. An elderly man, clearly not vigorous, Bassanes naturally becomes jealous of his beautiful young wife, who had been forced into wedlock with him for politic reasons. The first few scenes intimate that something is wrong between husband and wife, though the details of their trouble are not at this point clearly revealed:

Bassanes

The man that calls her wife; considers truly
 What Heaven of perfections he is Lord of,
 By thinking faire *Penthea* his: This thought
 Begets a kinde of Monster-Loue, which Loue
 Is nurse vnto a feare so strong, and seruile,
 As brands all dotage with a Iealousie.¹²³

This somewhat cryptic remark may admit of a number of interpretations; but it seems evident at least that Bassanes' relation to Penthea is highly unnatural and that he dotes on her beauty but in reality has little reason to call her his wife. That he passionately worships her beauty while at the same time he questions her honor appears somewhat later. Can she be fair and yet honest? he queries. Why should beauty always indicate a soul full of fault? Thus, portraying symptoms of incipient jealousy, he allows his thoughts to run in a sort of distemper as Penthea's fair image rises up in his mind. "Beauty?" he concludes, "ô it

¹²² *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 2835-37.

¹²³ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 148-54.

is/An vnmatcht blessing, or a horrid curse."¹²⁴ Yet Penthea's unmatched beauty is not solely responsible for the inception of jealousy in Bassanes' breast; the earlier intimation that something unnatural exists between them holds a clue to a much greater cause, which as yet remains a secret between husband and wife.

This secret Bassanes divulges in a plaint almost pathetic one day when Ithocles is visiting Penthea, his unfortunate sister. While the two stand talking together, Bassanes rushes into their presence raging with passion, only to cool down at once as he glimpses her beauty. As his passion subsides, he expresses the wish that he had the physical power to "preserue" her "in fruition/ As in deuotion,"¹²⁵ thus revealing the secret which no doubt rankled his mind and which certainly contributed much to the development of jealousy in him. The secret now out, he realizes that people will smirk at his weakness; as a consequence he lays plans for the moment "To out-doe Art, and cry a Iealousie,"¹²⁶ an exclamation which may be taken to mean that he now intends to rid himself of his affliction.

Now antecedent to Bassanes' confession many-tongued rumor had often suspected his weakness. Grausis, for example, Penthea's servant, twits Bassanes with words of innuendo and wit. "Wood not a chopping boy d'ee good at heart?"¹²⁷ she asks, so pointing her words that Bassanes cannot escape the force of their meaning. Somewhat later, after the secret is out, Orgilus bluntly accuses Bassanes of being a "barren rocke."¹²⁸ Even Penthea, grieving in frustrated wifedom and tenderly dreaming of "pretty pratling Babes" with whom she would have both smiled and cried, reveals that her husband prevents the realization of such visions conjured up in her youth. She finds

¹²⁴ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 625-31.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1294-95.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 1334-36. Gifford (*op. cit.*, I, 307) renders the last part of this line thus: "and jealousy decry."

¹²⁷ *The Broken Heart*, l. 688.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 1861.

it useless to dream of such now, after her unfruitful marriage; furthermore, she once becomes caustic and wants it understood clearly by all interested parties that such barrenness is in no way her "fault."¹²⁹ Beauty, impotence, barrenness—Ford seems to have run his fingers down the pages of Burton to find the causes of Bassanes' affliction.

The symptoms of Bassanes' disease stand out no less clear. Suspicious of every small deed, as all jealous men are, Bassanes orders Penthea's room blocked off from wandering eyes, the possessors of which he fears might wink at boudoir assignations. There is a lust "Committed by the eye," he scowls to Phulas, his servant, "that sweats, and trauels, /Plots, wakes, contriues, till the deformed bear-whelpe/ Adultery be lick'd into the act."¹³⁰ The thought that Penthea might carry on a secret affair so enrages him that he threatens to tear out Phulas' throat and rip up his maw should he allow a note, even half the size of a wart, to enter her room; for such he believes may prove a mystical token of lewdness.¹³¹ Suspecting that Penthea will cuckold him despite these precautions, Bassanes apparently keeps her a virtual prisoner; he allows almost no one outside family and servants to see her and even views Ithocles' visit with violent distrust. When Ithocles, for example, asks to see Penthea alone, Bassanes flies into a rage of suspicion and conjures up visions of pandering and incest. He is her brother and therefore of the same flesh and blood, he argues; then ho! they can be up to no good "bee't to sister, mother,/Wife, Couzen, any thing, 'mongst youths of met-all."¹³² At a subsequent meeting between Penthea and Ithocles, Bassanes charges into their presence dagger in hand, threatening Ithocles with violence and accusing him of satiating "his lust/ In Swine-security of bestiall in-

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1894 ff.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 564-69.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 572 ff.

¹³² *Ibid.*, ll. 851 ff.

cest,"¹³³ an indictment accompanied with so much staring, strutting, puffing, and sweating that Ithocles feels called upon to explain the cause of this unusual performance. "His Iealousie has rob'd him of his wits,"¹³⁴ he pronounces; and Grausis clinches the diagnosis by saying, "These are his megrims, firks and melancholies."¹³⁵ Even Bassanes is self-analytical enough to realize that passion has made him act thus; he is fully aware, furthermore, that his disease has reduced him to the level of beasts.¹³⁶ It is thus evident from these observations that Bassanes squares in almost every detail with the Burtonian picture of jealousy.

Such clear diagnoses of jealousy argue John Ford's intense interest in this postnuptial disease; yet Ford's greatest interest lies, not in depicting the victims of sorrow and jealousy, but in painting and repainting the tortures of heroes and heroines afflicted with heroical love.¹³⁷ Ford not only sympathizes with their dilemmas but lavishes upon them his most poignant poetry.

The Lover's Melancholy, though not Ford's strongest play, represents most completely this almost morbid interest in heroical love. The play opens with Menaphon's return from far travels upon which he embarked to cure "desperate loue."¹³⁸ Though such a cure ingloriously failed, Menaphon wants it understood clearly that he at least found in "change of Ayres" the kind of relief that "sicke men find in changing beds,"¹³⁹ whatever that relief may be. Menaphon's illness, however, fades into insignifi-

¹³³ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 1277-79.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 1276.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, l. 1284.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 1821 ff.

¹³⁷ See S. Blaine Ewing, *Burtonian Melancholy in the Plays of John Ford*, *passim*. Mr. Ewing believes that every character suffers from a slightly different disease because of differing causes, despite the similarity of symptoms.

¹³⁸ *The Lover's Melancholy*, l. 224.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 73-76. Cf. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 505: "as a sicke man hee must bee cured with change of Aire."

cance before Prince Palador's case, about which the main plot of the play revolves.

The causes and symptoms of the Prince's affliction are thus not hard to find. In the idle court of Famagosta in Cyprus, the young Prince yearned for beauteous Eroclea, a young woman thoughtful and chaste; but fate took her from him and left him alone to dwell in his grief. In accordance with Burtonian formula, melancholy quickly settles upon him; his "Motions of passion" become unavoidable,¹⁴⁰ and rare delusions trouble the "very soule" of his "Reason."¹⁴¹ These chemical actions in both the sensible and rational parts of Palador's soul soon burn his humours, producing outward symptoms of love-melancholy. Thus Amethus relates to Menaphon, who has inquired about the Prince's distemper, that Palador is still "the same melancholy man"¹⁴² he was before Menaphon left on his therapeutical trip: he will smile but seldom laugh, will lend an ear to business but deal in none, will gaze upon revels and fopperies but remain unmoved.¹⁴³ He shuns, furthermore, exercise and the society of men, preferring solitude and the writing of sonnets.¹⁴⁴

Such symptoms point to some sort of love-melancholy. At least, upon this suspicion Corax plans his now-familiar pantomime of melancholic diseases, through which he hopes to discover the exact disease from which the Prince suffers. In order to clinch his suspicions, Corax leaves a blank space on the paper-plot, hoping thereby to arouse Palador's curiosity. The plan works. For Palador, seeing the blank space, becomes curious and asks Corax what should be written therein, whereupon the physician explains that this space was reserved for a written description of love-melancholy, the power of which he then further describes:

¹⁴⁰ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 108-10.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2069-71.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, l. 96.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, ll. 97 ff.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 617.

Loue is the Tyrant of the heart, it darkens
 Reason, confounds discretion, deafe to counsell:
 It runnes a headlong course to desperate madnesse.¹⁴⁵

These words so startle Palador that Corax is certain that the Prince suffers from love-melancholy; and indeed his suspicions are well-founded, for further evidence, reserved for later analysis, reveals without doubt that the Prince has fallen victim to this common disease.¹⁴⁶

Other characters scattered through the body of Ford's drama present various stages of this same disease and hence exhibit some of its multifarious symptoms. Ithocles, for example, aroused by Calantha's beauty yet goaded by political ambition, appears wan and ghost-like;¹⁴⁷ Orgilus, because of his love for beautiful Penthea, finds his soul "sunke in sorrowes"¹⁴⁸ and his mind infected with thoughts of unsatisfied love; both he and Ithocles become so inflamed by "vnruely passions" that Armestes fears they will soon fall into madness.¹⁴⁹ Roseilli, unable to mask his affections for Fiormonda, hugs his own ruin;¹⁵⁰ and Fiormonda, fixing her heart on Fernando, runs to such extremes of "violence and passion" that she seriously threatens the one she so passionately loves.¹⁵¹ Biancha, mad with love for Fernando, swears by her dishevelled hair and wretched tears sacred vows of eternal love;¹⁵² and Annabella, incestuously enamored of her brother's fair form, cries ten, yes twenty, times as much and as often as Giovanni has cried for her. Because of this she presents a picture of illness so grave that Florio, her father, hires

¹⁴⁵ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1686-88.

¹⁴⁶ See S. Blaine Ewing, *op. cit.*, p. 36, for a different view of Palador's disease.

¹⁴⁷ *The Broken Heart*, l. 1604.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 210.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1757-59.

¹⁵⁰ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 845-47.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1697-1700.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, ll. 1350 ff.

from Padua a person who in the first part of the dramatic action passes for a skilled diagnostician.¹⁵³

All these characters are generously sketched; yet, since they fail to exhibit a full list of causes and symptoms, diagnoses of their diseases can be none too certain. But that failure cannot be attributed to three of Ford's heroes and heroines: Penthea, Fernando, and Giovanni present pathological cases so replete with detail that they almost appear to be hospital cases of heroical love.

Penthea presents the most pitiful case. Sick with love for Orgilus, she languishes in unhappy wedlock with her impotent husband, the jealous Bassanes. Since legally she can never realize her true love, she rapidly settles into a fixed habit of melancholy, presenting withal such a picture of heartbroken womanhood that for her and not for Calantha the play should be named. This situation, a proper cause of heroical love, soon begets changes in Penthea's body and soul. Her "vitall spirits" run low, despite Bassanes' hope that they may somehow be raised;¹⁵⁴ sorrows dull her "infected braine."¹⁵⁵ Her physical condition becomes such that during the last days of her life the rational part of her soul is completely dethroned. Hence Orgilus implores Bassanes not to make Penthea more miserable by trying to treat an incurable disease:

Play not with misery
Past cure: some angry Minister of Fate hath
Depos'd the Empresse of her soule, her reason,
From its most proper Throne.¹⁵⁶

It is only natural, according to Burtonian formula, that such changes in body and soul should bring in their train many outward symptoms of love-melancholy. Continually

¹⁵³ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 410-14, 582-86.

¹⁵⁴ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 1969-74.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1242-43.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 1851-54.

"feeding" her disease,¹⁵⁷ Penthea becomes careless of dress and appearance; she appears one day with her "*haire about her eares*" so distracted from weeping that she is not recognized by her own brother.¹⁵⁸ Moreover, for ten days she has neither eaten nor slept, despite the urgent prayers of her maids.¹⁵⁹ Such wild "rauings" foretell early destruction; indeed, they are so impressive that even after her death many details are recalled for further clarification. Orgilus, for example, in a sort of post-mortem, lists her "grones, and tortures,/ Her agonies, her miseries, afflictions";¹⁶⁰ and Calantha observes that her disease stretched out in "A long and painefull progresse."¹⁶¹ The unfortunate Penthea thus droops to her grave, a victim of love-melancholy.

Fernando suffers from the same disease; yet his symptoms seem much more severe. Young and handsome, living at ease within Pavy's court, he falls in love at first sight with beautiful Biancha and she falls in love with him. Within a few minutes after their first introduction he hurries away in order that he may be alone to think of her beauty; while thus occupied he conjures up visions which make him so lose his "reason" that he wonders whether he can check the unruly passion already heating his blood.¹⁶² He is unable, of course, to check the heat in his blood; by chemical action his humours therefore adust and as a consequence body and soul suffer violent disruption. Fernando himself explains in effect that this is exactly what happened. For when he later pleads his adulterous love he makes it clear that his lean looks and violent actions sprang not only out of uncontrolled passion but also from his unsuccessful attempts to master that passion:

¹⁵⁷ *The Broken Heart*, l. 1534.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 1863 ff.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 2230-31.

¹⁶² *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 449-53.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1941-44.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, l. 2386.

I haue a soule
 So anchor'd downe with cares in seas of woe,
 That passion, and the vowes I owe to you,
 Haue chang'd me to a leane *Anatomy*.¹⁶³

Fernando's excuse for adulterous love is thus firmly established upon physical grounds. Moreover, when Biancha for the time being feigns coldness to his concupiscible desires, Fernando's passion waxes even hotter¹⁶⁴ and as a result he becomes a completely irresponsible being.

Many outward symptoms attend this violent change taking place in Fernando's body and soul. First, Fernando seeks solitude. For when Petruchio and Roseilli encounter him, eagerly beseeching his help and advice concerning Roseilli's banishment from court, Fernando will have none of them, preferring to be alone to muse on his love. Once alone, he sighs, produces a letter, and rapidly scans its contents, while in the background unobserved D'Avolos watches him closely with the avowed purpose of determining what ails him:

Now is the time; alone; reading a letter; good; how now? striking his brest? what, in the name of policy, should this meane? tearing his haire? passion, by all the hopes of my life, *plaine passion*: now I perceiue it; if this bee not a fit of some violent affection, I am an asse in vnderstanding; why 'tis plaine, plainer and plainer: Loue in the extreamest.¹⁶⁵

D'Avolos proves to be no ass in understanding. What he sees is clear to him and to all those familiar with the doctrine of passions: Fernando suffers from heroical love. Yet, since D'Avolos is unaware of Fernando's adulterous pleadings, doubt remains in his mind as to the object of Fernando's violent passion, though he has a pretty good notion of her identity. Edging up to Fernando, D'Avolos slyly flashes two pictures before the afflicted man's eyes,

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, ll. 813-16.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 834-42.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 877-83.

one of Fiormonda, one of Biancha; and when Fernando violently starts at the sight of Biancha, D'Avolos knows that Pavy's wife is the cause of the sick man's unseemly actions. "[B]lessed, blessed discovery!" he murmurs, bowing himself from the scene. Unable to master his passion, Fernando remains a victim of heroical love until the day of his death.

Last on the list stands Giovanni, in many ways the most violent of all. At least, Ford allows him to be the most irresponsible and paints his physical suffering in the most vivid terms. Perhaps Giovanni appears in this superlative light because he suffers from a complication of melancholic diseases; he seems, peculiarly, to have contracted both religious melancholy and heroical love. That he suffered from the first because of his agnostic questionings there can be little doubt, for much of the play revolves around Giovanni's rebellion against conventional religion;¹⁶⁶ nevertheless, he seems to have been chiefly afflicted with heroical love. At any rate, the causes and symptoms of Giovanni's affliction match those found in Burton's analysis of love-melancholy; and, since a great part of the play concerns Giovanni's love for his sister, it seems logical to assume that heroical love dominated his life.

'Tis Pity She's a Whore opens, in fact, with Giovanni's arguments that his physical passion for Annabella can be justified on the grounds of her beauty and youth. As yet, however, in spite of his great passion, he has not made open love for fear of civil custom and law. Such "unnatural" restraint soon causes his passions to leap into flame, which in turn upsets the nice balance of humours and brings on a train of mental and physical disorders. In the very terms of the doctrine, Giovanni explains how these

¹⁶⁶ See Miss Cochnower, "John Ford," in *Seventeenth Century Studies*, p. 201, and S. Blaine Ewing, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-76. Both these authors show Giovanni to be suffering from religious melancholy.

unfortunate events have thus come to pass. First, he was struck by Annabella's "immortall beauty," which "vntun'd" the harmony of his "rest and life";¹⁶⁷ then, because he "too long suppress the hidden flames" which his sister's beauty engendered, he suddenly finds that they have almost "consum'd" him.¹⁶⁸ As a result, his "tortur'd" soul feels "affliction in the heate of Death."¹⁶⁹

A knowledge of this physical reaction taking place within Giovanni's body and soul goes far toward explaining why this rebellious young man now sighs, weeps, groans, and wastes away in despair. Like Penthea and Palador, he becomes "carelesse of him selfe"; like Fernando, he beats his breast and copiously weeps. When Annabella, for example, sees him walking under her balcony, she can hardly believe that that woeful thing, that thin shadow drifting before her, can be Giovanni, her brother. "Alas," she says, "hee beats his brest, and wipes his eyes/Drown'd all in teares."¹⁷⁰ Then, unknown to Giovanni, she descends from her point of observation so that she may question her brother about the troubles which obviously beset him. Her descent creates a dramatic hiatus, which allows Giovanni time to soliloquize upon his "incurable and restlesse wounds";¹⁷¹ however, she soon joins him below, cutting off his meditations but not changing the trend of his thought. He inquires of her health, and when she replies that she feels well enough he suddenly blurts out that he himself is violently ill:

Trust me but I am sicke, I feare so sick,
'Twill cost my life.¹⁷²

These words so alarm Annabella that all she can reply is, "Mercy forbid it." But Giovanni is not to be stopped; he next explains that his illness derives from her beauty,

¹⁶⁷ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 376-77.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 381 ff.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 372-73.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 288-89.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, l. 298.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, ll. 339-40.

that his unsatisfied passions have brought him to this parlous state; then, after making passionate love far from brotherly, he commands her to rip up his bosom so that the pangs of his love may be allayed.¹⁷⁸ Such actions as these, coupled with earlier symptoms and causes, show pretty convincingly that Giovanni suffers from heroic love.

Giovanni's case study completes the list of John Ford's clinical victims. From Meleander's sorrow through Giovanni's love-melancholy it is evident that Ford meticulously traced the causes and symptoms of his characters' various diseases. Such careful delineation makes it evident that Ford thoroughly absorbed Burton's physical conception of character. The result of this absorption is that Ford creates characters who act in accordance with their balance of humours, even as modern authors, in accordance with modern science, present human activity in terms of complexes and of assorted fixations, or even in terms of molecular action. What Freud seems to have done for Eugene O'Neill, Burton accomplished for John Ford; for both playwrights insist that character is determined by forces beyond human control. In this insistence upon the physical basis of character Ford removes human activity from the realm of ethical choice and, anticipating the exponents of modern thought, looks at life with amoral eyes.

VI

John Ford seems to have viewed human existence as a dramatic progress from cause to effect. His significant drama, at least, presents characters afflicted with several diseases which run out their courses or which are finally checked and hence cured. This progress, however, is in no way similar to the unfolding of action which begins in human mistakes and defections as in Greek and Shakespearean drama; it is, rather, a tracing of sundry diseases

¹⁷⁸ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 366-69.

as described in the pages of Burton. *The Lover's Melancholy*, for instance, not only portrays the afflictions of Meleander and of Prince Palador; the play also describes the treatment and cure of their separate diseases. The rest of Ford's significant drama presents the same pathological progress. *The Queen* diagnoses and cures the King's jealous passion; *The Broken Heart*, though named for Calantha's misfortune, cures the jealous Bassanes and makes a case study of Penthea's love-melancholy; *Love's Sacrifice* revolves around the development and results of passion in Fernando and Pavy; and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, whatever its other interests, is mainly significant in that it presents the inception, the apparent cure, and the final destructive powers of heroical love. Thus, although Ford's plays unroll according to dramatic laws of cause and effect, they fail to follow the dramatic patterns of *Oedipus Rex* or *Othello* for the simple reason that their action is based upon scientific, not upon ethical, statutes. In basing his drama upon scientific laws, Ford lays further claim to kinship with modern thought.

Without doubt, *The Lover's Melancholy* most clearly reveals how Ford based the dramatic action of his plays upon the laws of cause and effect as understood by popular science in the seventeenth century. Perhaps this is true for the reason that Ford seems to have written this play with the pages of Burton open before him. But whatever the reason, it is evident that the entire structure of the play rests upon the sorrow of old Meleander and the heroical love of Prince Palador, each of whom undergoes long and tedious treatment before he is cured at the end of the play.

The cure Corax devises for Meleander's affliction of sorrow covers a good part of the play, despite the fact that the main plot concerns the Prince and his love. First, Corax attempts to win the old gentleman's good will by repeating to him the all too familiar story of his downfall

and exile as though Corax himself had undergone its sad tortures. In this way Corax gains the afflicted man's trust. Next, the two drink to their newly found friendship from glasses which Corax had previously prepared, with the result that Meleander soon succumbs to the influence of drugs.¹⁷⁴

With these preliminaries out of the way, Corax feels that it is now time to press home the cure; accordingly, as action begins in Act V, he announces that the hour at last has struck in which to "conclude the busines." So far all has worked well; Meleander now lies asleep, and various members of the court have been given special parts to perform. In order that the cure may continue to run a favorable course, Corax warns that timing the steps is of special importance. In view of this warning, he admonishes Cleophila to be particularly careful and quick;¹⁷⁵ and she in return assures Rhetias that she has "studied" her "part with care, and will performe it" with "all the skill" she can muster.¹⁷⁶ Now, prior to these preparations, Meleander had been newly trimmed and clad in fresh linens while he lay under the influence of drugs; and now he has been placed, still in an unconscious state, before the assembled members of the court. With the stage thus set for a spectacular cure, Corax sets in motion a therapy which for public display has no equal in Caroline drama.

First he commands that soft music be played. To the strains of this music Meleander awakens. He is naturally puzzled, as anyone would be, not only to find himself freshly groomed, but also to discover that he lies on a couch before the members of court, who apparently stare at him as if expecting a miracle. Whatever his thoughts, the whole thing appears to him to be but the foolery of a "beguiling dreame"; and he expresses the wish to dream

¹⁷⁴ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1899 ff.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 2224 ff.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 2393-95.

the dream out. But this is not what Corax had planned; he therefore commands Meleander to arise from his couch so that his "Phisicke," the first part of which was now being administered, may not "turne to further sicknes."¹⁷⁷ Meleander, however, since he considers Corax a "Beare-leech," becomes greatly annoyed and will have little to do with the physician; he calls for his friends and repeats "phisicke, phisicke," as though incredulous that they would allow such unfair tactics to be practiced upon him. But Rhetias soon comforts him, assuring him that the physician's skill and learning are great; he furthermore adds that Meleander's condition was grave before the physician took him in hand. At this point in the cure, despite the physician's warning about careful timing, Corax describes in detail the strength of Meleander's disease and the effect it has had upon him:

I neuer saw a body in the wane
Of age, so ouer-spredd with seuerall sorts
Of such diseases, as the strength of Youth
Would groane vnder and sinke.¹⁷⁸

These words call out of Rhetias a generous compliment, almost the first the physician has yet received; he unhesitatingly replies that, in view of Meleander's grave state, Corax should receive more "glory in the miraculous cure."¹⁷⁹ With such pleasantries out of the way, the cure continues in earnest.

Corax announces that the crucial time is now at hand, but Meleander, by this time thoroughly awake, heaps scorn on the physician and all his attendants for trying to effect his cure. Fools! do they think they can ease his grief when disease sits so heavy upon him that all art has been unable to cure him? But despite Meleander's caustic remarks, Corax steadfastly continues the cure.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 2456-58.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 2471-74.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, l. 2475.

Aretus, one of the physician's attendants, announces that Palador not only has restored to the old gentleman all his former court offices but has added for good measure an additional honor, the Marshallship of all Cyprus. At this announcement, Corax closely eyes the patient; and, apparently noticing a change, says, "There's one Pill workes."¹⁸⁰ Amethus, another attendant, next salutes Meleander as Grand Commander of Ports throughout Palador's Principalities, at which Corax asks, "D'ee feele your physick stirring yet?"¹⁸¹ Then Sophronos presents Meleander a jewel enclosing his lost daughter's picture, accompanying his gift with the cryptic remark that Palador would be honored to be considered Meleander's son. With these steps accomplished, Corax queries Meleander directly: "What hope now of your Cure?"¹⁸² It is evident that the three "pills" have "worked," for as Meleander muses upon his honors and gifts the "dotage" of his "sorrows" begins to slip rapidly from him. As a result, Corax now thinks it time to apply the last "Cordiall," which is administered in the form of Eroclea herself,¹⁸³ Meleander's long-lost daughter. At her appearance Meleander takes on new life, completely cured of his former disease:

Come hither, let me kisse thee—with a pride,
 Strength, courage, and fresh blood, which now thy presence
 Hath stor'd me with, I kneele before their Altars,
 Whose soueraignty kept guard about thy safety.
 Aske, aske thy Sister (prethee) shee'le tell thee
 How I haue been much mad.¹⁸⁴

Such therapy as this and such happy results are in thorough accord with Burtonian formula; in fact, the master him-

¹⁸⁰ *The Lover's Melancholy*, l. 2505.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, l. 2517.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, l. 2533.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, l. 2544.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 2589-94.

self suggests the devices which Corax applied with such patent success:

If his weaknesse be such, that he cannot discerne what is amisse, correct or satisfie, it behoues them by counsell, comfort, or perswasion, by faire or foule meanes, to alienate his minde, by some artificiall invention, or some contrary perswasion, to remoue all obiects, causes, companies, occasions, as may any waies molest him, to humour him, please him, diuert him, and if it be possible, by altering his course of life, to giue him security and satisfaction. If hee conceale his grieuances, and will not be knowne of them: *They must obserue by his lookes, gestures, motions, phantasie, what it is that offends*, & then to apply remedies vnto him: many are instantly cured, when their mindes are satisfied.¹⁸⁵

The course of Meleander's disease, however, is secondary to the main plot of the play; of primary significance is Prince Palador's love for his long-lost Eroclea. Prior analysis has shown that Palador fell ill because fate took Eroclea from him; it has also revealed the extent of his suffering and established that his disease was heroical love. But this hardly makes clear the mechanical structure upon which the whole play is built. Only by tracing the details of Palador's progress from sickness to health will Ford's dependence upon Burtonian formula become fully apparent.

Ford opens *The Lover's Melancholy* by a discourse upon Palador's health,¹⁸⁶ which subsequently appears so distressing that Corax plans a diagnostic "deuise."¹⁸⁷ This seems to be the first logical step, for apparently no one knows the exact nature of the Prince's affliction. Even Aretus, for example, Palador's old tutor, admits his ignorance when he states his belief that the Prince's passions may be cooled only after "something hid/ Of his distemper" is brought to light.¹⁸⁸ At any rate, Corax spends

¹⁸⁵ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, pp. 272-73.

¹⁸⁶ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 95 ff.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 406 ff.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 578-80.

a good deal of time conjuring up an elaborate device for the purpose of diagnosing the Prince's disease; but before he inflicts upon Palador the now familiar medical pantomime he subjects him to preliminary treatment corrective of melancholy in general. It is apparent, however, that Palador rebels against this general therapy:

A Booke! is this the early exercise
I did prescribe? in stead of following health,
Which all mē couet, you pursue your disease.
Where's your great Horse, your Hounds, your set at Tennis,
Your Balloone ball, the practice of your dancing,
Your casting of the sledge, or learning how
To tosse a Pike; all chang'd into a Sonnet?¹⁸⁹

Since the Prince thus shows no improvement, Corax produces his mask in the hope that he will be enabled thereby to determine the specific disease from which Palador suffers and in turn be guided to a definite cure.

But it takes time to get the mask under way. Immediately prior to its presentation in court, Aretus again muses over the mystery of the Prince's distemper; yet he optimistically feels, now that Corax has planned the device, that the physician will reveal what "deuill/This *Melancholy* is, which can transforme/Men into Monsters."¹⁹⁰ Apparently flattered by such remarks, Corax promises that ere many minutes pass he will have diagnosed the Prince's disease or else be censured for ignorance.¹⁹¹ Accordingly, he calls for his actors and the Mask of Melancholy begins, with the result that Corax convinces himself that Palador's disease is definitely "*Loue-Melancholy*."¹⁹² Corax, or anyone else, can now administer specialized treatment.

The specific cure for Palador's love-melancholy proves to be the long-lost Eroclea, whose absence had been the cause of the Prince's disease. Why so obvious a cause and

¹⁸⁹ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 611-17.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 1243-48.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1271-74.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, ll. 1674-77.

so easy a cure had never occurred to Corax and his dramatic assistants is never made clear; had they used their imaginations they could have spared the court a very tedious mask. Perhaps Ford kept them in obvious ignorance so that he himself could display a specialized knowledge of melancholic diseases. Whatever the reason, after the proper passage of time, Ford allows Rhetias to carry out Palador's cure. This is not done, however, until after the Prince has taken a turn for the worse and seems so "thoroughly mou'd" and so "much distemp'ed"¹⁹³ that his very life seems endangered. At this time Rhetias brings forth Eroclea, whom he has brought back from Athens; and when she appears before Palador's eyes his disease finds a cure. With joy in his heart he welcomes her back to his arms:

Come home, home to my heart, thou *banisht-peace*,
My extasie of ioyes would speake in passion,
But that I would not lose that part of man,
Which is reseru'd to intertaine content.¹⁹⁴

But the end is not yet. Palador, in a review of his case, thanks his benefactors for arranging his cure:

Rhetias, for thee
And *Corax*, I haue more then common [*sic*] thanks.
On, to the Temple; there all solemne Rites
Perform'd, a generall Feast shall be proclaim'd.
The *Louers Melancholy* hath found cure;
Sorrowes are chang'd to Bride-songs.¹⁹⁵

Here, then, is Palador's progress from sickness to health; here is a plot which depends almost entirely upon the mechanical formula of Burton. Indeed, even the last lines of the play are reminiscent of the terms closing Burton's treatment of love-melancholy:

¹⁹³ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 2040-41.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 2198-2201.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 2721-26.

*After many troubles and cares, the marriages of louers are more sweet and pleasant. As we commonly conclude a Comedy with a wedding, and shaking of hands, lets shut vp our discourse, and end all with an Epithalamium.*¹⁹⁶

Such reminiscences, however, are of minor importance; it is of more significance that Ford has here created a progress similar to that in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

The Queen also presents a dramatic progress from cause to effect which leads to happy results; the whole play, in fact, depends upon the skillful maneuvering of Alphonso's affections from melancholy to jealousy, from jealousy to happy marital love, and thus to sound health, by approved Burtonian devices. Alphonso is the patient, Muretto the doctor, and the Queen the instrument of cure. How all this happens in this mechanical way may now be traced in the main course of the plot.

Alphonso, as antecedent description reveals, suffers from sour discontents and general melancholies which Muretto believes he can cure by inducing jealousy. Hence Muretto, as a first step in this plan, informs Alphonso that the Queen is unfaithful, hoping that such information will arouse jealousy in the King's sensible soul. He further relates, in pursuance of the same plan, that the Queen and Petruchi, a young lord in court, have exchanged some odd amorous glances, though he hastily adds that they possibly meant little or no harm. No harm? Alphonso immediately queries. He is sure that they mean to graft horns on his forehead—nothing else! Then, as Alphonso's passions flame hotter, Muretto describes how Petruchi accompanied the Queen to her own private dwelling, painting their clandestine meeting in colors so suggestive of lust that Alphonso shouts in rage and despair.¹⁹⁷ From

¹⁹⁶ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 536.

¹⁹⁷ *The Queen*, ll. 1655-59.

here until his complete cure at the end of the play Alphonso presents a picture of jealousy.

Now Muretto also knows the power of beauty; he is fully aware that the Queen's goddess-like face may arouse a desire of possession which in turn may struggle against the passion of jealousy and perhaps even displace it. With this in mind, Muretto begins to list the details of the Queen's beauty for the specific purpose of turning Alphonso's passions from jealousy to concupiscible love, just as he had earlier displaced the King's sour discontents by fomenting jealousy in his sensible soul. He therefore upon every occasion calls Alphonso's attention to the Queen's many beauties, at the same time lamenting that it is indeed a pity that she cannot be as fair within as without.¹⁹⁸ After several such applications the proper chemical reaction begins; Alphonso surfeits his eyes with her beauty until his mind becomes quite "distract." Moreover, he is now faced with the physical problem whether to abandon the Queen and so himself die with unsatisfied passion or to satisfy his concupiscible desires knowing fully that her adultery will make jealousy rage.¹⁹⁹ At this point in the treatment, Alphonso's "jealousy" and "affections" wrestle within him for the "mastery";²⁰⁰ and as a consequence Muretto's job grows much more complex.

Muretto, however, is in no way dismayed by this turn of affairs; on the contrary, this strife between affections and jealousy is a part of his plan. For he knows that the Queen herself suffers from unsatisfied passion; and he is soon to reveal that, if he can manage to bring the Queen and Alphonso together in the way marital bonds always intended, both will be instantly cured. Time, however, is yet too green for this happy conclusion; meanwhile Alphonso's jealousy has become so uncontrollable that he

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 3361-63.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2671-76.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 3349 ff.

condemns the Queen to death unless she can produce a champion to uphold her.

Hence in due time the whole court assembles on the field of honor, where all eagerly await the duel between Alphonso and some champion, a tourney which will either condemn the Queen or give her new life. The trumpet sounds; but no rider enters the lists. The trumpet sounds again, this time heralding Velasco, who offers to defend the Queen's honor. Again the trumpet is wound; and to Alphonso's great surprise Petruchi and later Muretto appear in the lists, both ready to defend the Queen with their arms. Confronted by such unlooked-for foes, Alphonso falls back and cries that he is the victim of a conspiracy; he demands, furthermore, that Muretto quickly explain the confused situation. His position now jeopardized, Muretto makes clear the progression of events leading up to this unusual occasion, a series of steps wholly in keeping with the four-humours doctrine:

Wonder not my Lords, but lend mee your attentions, I saw with what violence he pursude his resolutions not more in detestation of the Queen in particular, then of all her sex in generall. That I may not weary your patience: I bent all my Studies to devise, which way I might do service to my country, by reclayming the distraction of his discontents. And having felt his disposition in every pulse, I found him most addicted to this pestilence of jealousy with a strong persuasion of which; I from time to time, ever fed him by degrees, till I brought the Queen and the noble Petruchi into the dangers they yet stand in. But with all (and herin I appeale to your Majesties own approbation) I season'd my words with such an intermixing the praises of the Queens bewty, that from jealousy I drew the King into a serious examination of her perfections.²⁰¹

At length having found him indeed surely affected, I perceav'd, that nothing but the suppos'd blemish of her dishonour, could work a second divorce between them.²⁰²

²⁰¹ *The Queen*, ll. 3583-3605.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, ll. 3608-12.

Now my Lords, to clear that imputation, I knew how easie it would be, by the apparent certainty it selfe, In all which, if I have erred, it is the error of a loy[a]ll service.²⁰³

The Queen's honor thus cleared, Alphonso's jealousy subsides; he claims his wife with a new happiness, knowing that his concupiscible desires now can be satisfied through the normal rites of marital love. The play thus concludes with the calm of passion allayed and diseases now cured:

Thus after storms a calm
Is ever welcomest: Now we have past
The worst, and all I hope is well at last.²⁰⁴

Here again, then, is a clear progress from sickness to health; for it is evident that the whole play is based on the cure of Alphonso's distemper. Furthermore, such a cure was effected because of Muretto's firm knowledge of the four-humours doctrine and because Ford saw fit to erect no barriers in the treatment of Alphonso's diseases.

Such happy results, however, Ford reserves for his comedy; his tragedy, though following the same mechanical progress, stops short of cures simply because some situations will not admit the kind of therapeutical measures which both Corax and Muretto applied with such signal success. When such situations arise, Ford brings his characters to grief and destruction through the inexorable formula of the doctrine of passions; and it is about men and women so caught in this formula that Ford writes his best plays.

The Broken Heart is usually considered one of John Ford's strongest plays; at least, it is most often included in anthologies of Renaissance drama. It is significant, therefore, that this play which has been so much admired also depends for its meaning upon the Burtonian formula of cause and effect. This formula is seen in Bassanes' disease and its partial cure; but of greater importance is

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, ll. 3614-18.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 3872-75.

the fact that both Penthea and Orgilus step by step illustrate a progress from health to destruction. Indeed, regardless of Calantha's troubles and death, the significant action comprises Penthea's love for Orgilus, his love for her, and their dilemma because of her marriage to jealous Bassanes.

But before this progress is traced it is well to examine Bassanes' part in the play. Bassanes suffers immensely; yet by intelligent self-treatment he achieves toward the end of the drama a partial if not a final cure. This treatment begins immediately after a particularly violent outburst of rage, when jealous passions flame their hottest. Warned by Ithocles that he will take his sister Penthea home if he continues such outrageous actions, Bassanes stops short and begins to consider a cure. "Diseases desperate must find cures alike,"²⁰⁵ he says; hence he invokes the gods to give him an abundance of patience by which he hopes to drive out his extreme, jealous passion. He soberly realizes that the redeeming faculty of man is his reason; furthermore, he now apprehends that his passions have overruled reason and have thus reduced him to the level of beasts. Therefore, in redress for this beastly performance, he resolves to assume a patience so strong that no storm, however great, can destroy his composure.²⁰⁶

Shortly after this resolution Bassanes puts himself to the test. When Penthea walks before him, complaining pitifully about her unfortunate state, Bassanes remains firm in spite of the pointed remarks of Orgilus and his mocking shout, "Behold a patience!"²⁰⁷ Soon the supreme test arrives. Orgilus, still a plague to Bassanes, comes seeking the friendship of this heretofore jealous man, a quest so suspicious that Bassanes beseeches heaven for even more patience; for he is quite sure, in view of recent events, that his old enemy has come solely to prick his newborn

²⁰⁵ *The Broken Heart*, l. 1330.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 1821 ff.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 1902-5.

resolution. But the mission of Orgilus is absolutely sincere; Orgilus even promises to reveal a secret that will put an end to Bassanes' griefs, should Bassanes agree to put on a "constancy of patience" unknown to all history. Bassanes agrees; and both direct their steps toward the mask about to be played in court where the test will take place.²⁰⁸

The mask presents the supreme test; here triple deaths are announced—Penthea's, her brother's, and the King's. And Bassanes because of his resolution of patience receives the news with unruffled mien. Yet for some reason Ford fails to describe the progress of Bassanes' treatment beyond this partial cure. At the end of the play, for example, as dying Calantha metes out justice in court, Bassanes admits that griefs still at times cloud his reason; and Calantha, in view of this, assigns him a position the duties of which should prove efficacious in completing his cure:

Be *Sparta's* Marshall:

The multitudes of high employments could not
But set a peace to priuate griefes.²⁰⁹

The fate of Bassanes is thus left for the future. But what Calantha assigned him was in accordance with Burtonian formula; in fact, Bassanes' whole course of treatment follows almost verbatim the steps listed in the *Anatomy* itself:

Yet what I haue formerly said of other Melancholy, I will say againe, it may be cured or mitigated at least by some contrary passion, good counsell and perswasion, if it be withstood in the beginning, maturely resisted, *and as those ancients holds, the nayles of it be pared before they growe too long.* No better meanes to resist or expell it then by avoiding idlenesse, to be still seriously busied about some matters of importance, to driue out those vaine

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 2299 ff.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2565–67.

feares, foolish phantasies and irksome suspicions out of his head,
²¹⁰

This is the last significant cure Ford attempts; indeed, the rest of Ford's tragic characters find their particular therapies blocked by custom and law. The result is that his heroes and heroines pursue paths of violence and end their careers in death.

Orgilus and Penthea follow this road to destruction. Each is deeply in love with the other; thus, when the action begins, their concupiscible desires have been already aroused by former mutual courtship, which makes them secretly yearn for the consummation of love. But they are unable to satisfy the passions burning in their sensible souls because Ithocles has forced his sister Penthea into unwanted marriage with jealous Bassanes. Consequently, as the doctrine of passions demands, they develop love-melancholy, which soon becomes so strong and persistent that both are forced into paths of physical suffering and death. Something of Penthea's disease has already been seen, with her groans, tears, sighs, and painful journey toward death; but it is important to note, in addition to this, several other steps in her progress. Penthea herself, for example, realizes the gravity of her situation; she relates that no therapy exists for her ills and seems to understand clearly that her only "remedy"

Must be a winding sheet, a fold of lead,
 And some vntrod-on corner in the earth.²¹¹

Moreover, her grasp of the dilemma and its physical results is much firmer than that of Bassanes, who hopes through herbs to light on a cure. With this hope in mind he sends to Athens for herbals which he believes will prove efficacious;²¹² but Penthea dies before any are found. Thus Penthea, untreated and unable to quench her desires

²¹⁰ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 559.

²¹¹ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 1552-54.

²¹² *Ibid.*, ll. 2275 ff.

in that "last and best refuge," marriage by custom and law, slips to her grave a victim of heroical love.

Orgilus runs a parallel path, though his course is more violent. Thwarted in love, he disguises himself as a scholar and releases rumors that he has traveled to Athens to pursue some sort of study; but he actually remains in Sparta, as subsequent action reveals, and pursues secretly his love for unhappy Penthea. Before he pursues this love under the guise of a scholar, however, he realizes, as Penthea had done also, that

Physicke yet hath neuer found
A remedy, to cure a Louers wound.²¹³

Accordingly his disease develops so rapidly that Technicus, his tutor, notes on his "aspect" a growth of "dangerous extent."²¹⁴ His clandestine meeting with Penthea, furthermore, so inflames his passions that he throws off his disguise and appears suddenly in court, where he relates that an infection drove him from Athens. The truth of his story cannot be denied, for infection indeed drove him from his disguise; moreover, his claim receives credence in that he himself seems to have brought back some sort of distemper. Crotolon, for example, his old father, observes with a good deal of fear the rapid growth of disease in his son;²¹⁵ and Orgilus himself soon begins a series of actions which disclose the strength of his passion. Characteristic of men afflicted with heroical love, he runs amuck; void of all fear, he catches Ithocles in an ingenious machine chair, runs him through, and then, after he has been condemned to death, slits his own veins and watches his own blood ebb out. During this performance he makes it perfectly clear that Penthea's marriage to Bassanes and hence his unsatisfied passions have brought on all these sanguinary events;²¹⁶ in addition to this, Nearchus, the

²¹³ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 414-15.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 1063.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1460 ff.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 2449 ff.

Prince of Argos, succinctly explains that the thwarted love of Orgilus began the progress of death and destruction:

affections iniur'd
By tyrannie, or rigour of compulsion,
Like Tempest-threatned Trees vnfirmely rooted,
Ne're spring to timely growth: obserue, for instance,
Life-spent *Pentheia*, and vnhappy *Orgilus*.²¹⁷

Evidently Ford wished to emphasize the springs of this unhappy progress; in any event, he shows the dilemma of lovers thwarted by law and, because no legal cure is available, sends them to their deaths.

Love's Sacrifice also unfolds according to Burtonian formula. Fernando is smitten by Biancha's beauty and Biancha is smitten by him. But she is already the Duchess of Pavy, and because of this the two clandestine lovers find themselves unable to satisfy their concupiscible desires. As a result of this restraint the two quickly contract heroical love and in turn the Duke, because of what he hears and observes, falls victim to his own jealous passions. Now all three of them run a Burtonian progress from sickness to death; but it will be sufficient for this particular analysis to trace only Fernando's course in the world, since his progress carries the other two with him.

The main action begins with Fernando's glimpsing Biancha's beauty, a sight which so stirs his blood that he metaphorically offers all India's gold in exchange for one private word with such a "hart-wounding beauty."²¹⁸ Fortunately, circumstances allow him more than one word at much less expense; and at the opportune moment he declares such passionate love that D'Avolos finds an "infinite appetite of lust in the piercing adultery of his eye."²¹⁹ Fernando's appetite continues to grow. Kneeling in agonized love, he vows to Biancha that freedom to

²¹⁷ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 2016-20.

²¹⁸ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 606-8.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1070-71.

possess her beautiful body will alone allow surcease of passion:

O *Madam*, still I find
No Physicke strong to cure a tortur'd mind,
But freedome from the torture it sustaines.²²⁰

Freedom to possess Biancha, however, creates a number of problems. Biancha is after all Pavy's wife; furthermore, these clandestine lovers are curiously squeamish about actually quenching their passions in physical love. Hence, though their minds reek with adultery, they decide to remain strangers to each others' beds. But this unnatural condition, instead of quieting their love, makes it wax even hotter; and as a result Fernando hazards his reputation and life to obtain his desires. Now Fiormonda subsequently warns him that his steps lead to confusion;²²¹ moreover, he himself has recognized clearly the dangers which lie in his path. He has pondered, for example, the fact that Biancha is married, that "she's the Dukes wife" and "bosom'd to" his "friend";²²² he knows that these should be reasons enough to quench flames even in hell. Yet the inexorable Burtonian formula forces him to continue his love; and as a result, toward the end of the play, he is found pursuing his concupiscible desires in deep, passionate embraces with a Duchess not only willing but passion-ridden herself.

The four-humours doctrine decrees immediate results to such a course of heroical love; either Biancha and Fernando must satisfy their ungovernable passions or they will bring doom upon themselves and upon others. But legally they cannot consummate love; hence they bring death to themselves and to Pavy simply because their passions, once aroused, set in motion an inevitable progress ending in their destruction. Such a conclusion comes swiftly, once the Duke discovers the two clandestine lovers

²²⁰ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 1198-1200.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2172-74.

²²² *Ibid.*, ll. 860-71.

clasped in passionate embraces, discussing whether the iron laws of ceremony should stand between them and their lust. The Duke stabs Biancha to death; Fernando escapes immediate punishment only to commit suicide later over the open tomb containing Biancha's beautiful body. In this last act Fernando makes it clear in terms of the doctrine that his uncontrolled passions have forced these tragic results:

Here lyes the monument of all my hopes.
Had [not] eager Lust intrunk'd my conquered soule,
I had not buried liuing ioyes in death.²²³

In addition, Pavy now stabs himself, bringing to an end the tragic progress started by the inception of heroical love in Fernando's soul. Even Burton himself could scarcely trace a more mechanical course or bring about a more prodigious denouement.

Yet *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* perhaps most tragically shows the four-humours doctrine at work. Giovanni loves his sister, Annabella; she returns his passion tenfold; but traditional laws forbid them to satisfy their concupiscible desires. Such desires, however, cannot be denied; and both find themselves attempting to cure their ungovernable passions in an incestuous bed. Moreover, this therapy for a while allays the force of their passion and they appear normal, so far as their health is concerned; but custom again intervenes and in the end Giovanni's disease brings doom to them all. High points in the plot will reveal this progress from cause to effect.

The first part of the play shows Giovanni aware of his developing disease and describes his attempt to find a possible cure. Because of his passion he has sought the advice of "a wise, fatherly, reuerent, discreet person, a man of authority,"²²⁴ in this particular case Giovanni's

²²³ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 2772-74.

²²⁴ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 509.

teacher-confessor, Friar Bonaventura. From this "holy man" he asks "What Cure shall giue" him "ease in these extreames,"²²⁵ later described as physical pangs for his sister. Moreover, he unburdens his incestuous soul to Bonaventura, pointing out his great love and querying whether "customary forme" should stand between him and his burning desires. Horrified at such a confession, Bonaventura advises that Giovanni marry some other woman for the good of both his body and soul; but rebellious Giovanni retorts that it would be easier to stop the ebb and flow of the tide than to dissuade him from carrying out his desires. Bonaventura then changes his tactics; he suggests that Giovanni go to his father's house, fall on his knees, and pray for freedom from passion and for strength to "cleanse the leprosie of Lust/That rots" his "Soule."²²⁶ Meanwhile, Bonaventura will attempt to think up some other treatment should penance fail to cool Giovanni's passion. But such devices miserably fail, and Giovanni's heroical love continues to grow.

The disease almost immediately takes physical toll, for Giovanni soon appears sad and lean. Brooding over Annabella's fair form—her lips would "tempt a Saint," her hands would "make an *Anchoret* Lasciuious"²²⁷—he suddenly blurts out to his sister that his physical condition has become such that, despite his reasoning with custom, he must allay his passion or die.²²⁸ Driven by forces beyond his control, "void of feare of God or men," Giovanni appears willing now to break all human laws in order to satisfy the raging lust in his soul.²²⁹ When first he becomes passionately importunate, Annabella shrinks

²²⁵ 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, ll. 99-100.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 133-34.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 357-58.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 381-89.

²²⁹ *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 496. These are the extreme effects of heroical love, as Burton describes them.

back; but when she admits that she too most passionately loves him Giovanni ascends into the seventh heaven of joy. "What must we now doe?" he asks in a tense voice; and when Annabella pliantly answers, "What you will,"²³⁰ Giovanni pulls her aside saying, "Come then,"

After so many teares as wee haue wept,
Let's learne to court in smiles. to kisse and sleepe.²³¹

Annabella and Giovanni then enter their incestuous bed, from which they emerge the next day recalling their stolen delights. Reviewing the course of their action—his reaping her virtue, their physical joys—they joke and play with each other like a pair of young lovers fresh from honeymoon wonders, aware that one shadow only may steal across their summer of joy—marriage for either may cut short their present delights. But even this shadow, appearing on the horizon, disappears in their newly found day. Giovanni's disease has apparently found cure.

This bliss, however, soon comes to an end. One morning Putana, Annabella's nurse, rushes in to Giovanni bearing momentous news: Annabella lies pregnant! Can Putana be sure? is Giovanni's first question. Yes, Putana is sure, having seen morning sickness before. Such information sends Giovanni scurrying to Friar Bonaventura with such dispatch that he hardly finds time to warn Putana that no doctor is to approach Annabella, and that, should his father seek the source of her sickness, she is to give out news that ill diet has caused Annabella's discomfort. But Bonaventura, apparently, has little advice for a man who has so flagrantly disregarded his earlier words; nevertheless, he subsequently makes it clear to Annabella that for the sake of her soul she must marry and that by all means their incestuous love must come to an end.²³²

²³⁰ 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, ll. 432-33.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 433-35.

²³² *Ibid.*, ll. 1435-37.

The Friar's suggestions are soon carried out; Annabella shortly marries Soranzo, a suitor of long standing, and Giovanni's earlier fear that marriage might come between him and his sister now becomes a reality.

This marriage might have answered many embarrassing questions had Giovanni and Annabella been able to control their desires; but even after her marriage the heat of their passions drives them to incest. Furthermore, Soranzo soon discovers Annabella's condition, and by the unwritten law he threatens her life should she refuse to divulge the name of the unborn child's father. From here on it is evident not only that Giovanni's clandestine meetings with Annabella will be entirely impossible but also that, because of this situation, death must ensue.

Events, as predicted by Burton, occur with rapidity. At first Annabella stands up bravely against the accusations of her husband and refuses to make public her secret; but, softened by Bonaventura's holy entreaties, she repents and leaves with the man of God a letter for Giovanni informing him that all is discovered. But before Giovanni reads this confessional letter he boasts to Bonaventura that he has enjoyed his sister's embraces even after her marriage and that kisses still taste as sweet as the one he first reaped, virgin pure.²³³ He then opens the letter. He now suddenly realizes that he and his sister will be kept forever apart, and as a consequence his passions so flame that he again exhibits the symptoms and the effects of heroical love:

Despaire or tortures of a thousand hells
All's one to mee
If I must totter like a well-growne Oake,
Some vnder shrubs shall in my weighty fall
Be crusht to splitts: with me they all shall perish.²³⁴

Now completely distracted, Giovanni seeks out Annabella, crying that "*Reuenge is*" his and that "*Honour doth loue*

²³³ *Ibid.*, ll. 2150 ff.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 2223-31.

command";²³⁵ then in extreme desperation he stabs her, rips out her heart, and carries it on the tip of his dagger to a banquet which Soranzo had earlier planned. Entering the hall "trim'd in reeking blood," he stands "proud in the spoyle/ Of *Loue* and *Vengeance*,"²³⁶ a true victim of heroical love. Moreover, unabashed by Florio's exact observation that "hee's a frantick mad-man,"²³⁷ Giovanni speaks on apace, relating that for nine months he enjoyed sweet Annabella's sheets before her fruitful womb betrayed their stolen delights. After thus delivering himself, Giovanni kills Soranzo outright and a moment later himself falls mortally wounded; and with this flow of blood the progress of heroical love comes to a close. Whatever else may be said about Giovanni's incestuous love and its unhappy effects, it is clear that *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* embodies the letter and spirit of the mechanistic doctrine of humours.

Thus in all his significant²³⁸ plays Ford builds his plot structure upon the four-humours doctrine and in so doing presents a mechanistic progress from cause to effect. Such a progress makes Ford's drama appear chiefly amoral. Although a few of the old moral laws seem to obtain, for the most part Ford's heroes and heroines dwell in a world ruled by physical forces which can be considered neither evil nor good. No Macbeth goes to his doom because of overweening ambition; no Othello meets grief because of misguided passion. Instead, Fernando runs to despair and confusion because of immutable physical laws and

²³⁵ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, l. 2402.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 2436-38.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, l. 2472.

²³⁸ It is perhaps presumptuous to omit *Perkin Warbeck*, *The Lady's Trial*, and *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble* from this list; but relatively they are unimportant in this part of the study of Ford's tragedy. Though popular science influenced them, it affected their plot structure to no great extent. See, however, Lawrence Babb, "Abnormal Psychology in John Ford's *Perkin Warbeck*," *Modern Language Notes*, LI (1936), 234-37.

Giovanni pulls down his own house because, in his own case at least, heroical love cannot be properly treated and hence goes uncured. In this world of scientific law, despite Annabella's repentance, Ford avoids taking a clear moral stand in that he portrays conventional ethics in conflict with immutable physical forces. The problem of evil is thus left unresolved in his deterministic approach to the behavior and values of man.

This deterministic approach to man's course in the world and the amoral philosophy attendant upon it foreshadowed in Ford's time the shape of modern thought. The beliefs which pervaded Ford's drama appear not only in scientific and philosophical works of today but also in the novels and plays of many modern writers. With Bertrand Russell, Thomas Hardy, and Eugene O'Neill, John Ford sees life, not as a pilgrimage governed by moral decisions which spring from a free and responsible will, but as a journey ruled by amoral scientific statutes which inexorably sweep man to his doom. Perhaps it is this view of life that inspired Havelock Ellis to place Ford nearer to Flaubert than to Shakespeare, and M. Joan Sargeant to say that "in this age we are in outlook nearer to Ford than the generations of the intervening centuries."

CHAPTER 3

Unbridled Individualism

THE GOSPEL of individualism, together with the belief in scientific determinism, enjoyed a rapid growth in the first half of the seventeenth century. From Edinburgh to London, England resounded with paper debates, the specific issues of which, though now of only antiquarian interest, opened up general questions of individual rights that shook the foundations of religious and political authority. As the press poured out pamphlet after pamphlet it began to be evident that old institutions could never again exert unchallenged control over society as long as individuals possessed the right to publish their thoughts. Indeed, the idea that ultimate truth could be found not in authoritative decrees but in the heat and dust of controversial exchange began to take shape. John Lilburne and William Prynne exemplified this new notion; John Milton, in *Areopagitica*, gave the idea such crystalline form that since its publication in 1644 the discovery of truth has generally been considered contingent upon freedom of thought and expression. In short, before the century had half run its course, old authorities began to crumble and fall, new ideas of revolt and of extreme individualism began to emerge, and beliefs which now pass for modern began to flourish in the mind of the common man.

While these modern ideas took shape John Ford wrote for the stage. *The Lover's Melancholy* appeared in the same year Peter Smart revolted against Bishop Neale's

innovations at Durham; the rest of Ford's plays fell from his pen during the great controversies in city and court which debated the rights of individual conscience. No matter which way Ford turned in the period preceding the Civil Wars, he found himself face to face with political and religious controversy so solemn and earnest that Stuart citizens lost their ears and suffered long prison terms because of their belief in individual rights.

Particular issues of politics and religion, however, probably received little attention from Ford. Nevertheless, he entered into the spirit of revolt and espoused the cause of individual rights with the enthusiasm of a polemical writer. This spirit he no doubt found not in Puritan pamphlets but in the court of Charles I, which spoke of matters more to his liking. In any event, a coterie of Platonic love congenial to Ford's cast of mind and similar in spirit to the general trend of revolt flourished in the court; furthermore, this coterie exalted the brand of unbridled individualism so commonly associated with contemporary thought. If, then, Ford followed the general trend of revolt and turned to the manners and morals of this coterie, he could easily have found notions the absorption of which would allow him to be related to modern values and thought.

I

Though John Ford espoused the cause of unbridled individualism and thus associated himself with the spirit of his day, tradition holds that he stood aloof from the crowd. No record shows him actually taking part in controversial debates; moreover, it is uncertain that he was aware of the tremendous issues under discussion about him. With the air of an aristocrat he spoke of his detachment from affairs of the day and of his leisure, and the tone of his work is in complete harmony with the ideals of grace and ease found in the Renaissance court. For

this reason it has been assumed that Ford found his ideals and values in pastoral novels and sugared sonnets, both of which had been popular in Queen Elizabeth's circle. To be sure, he must have been acquainted with these romantic genres; indeed, his early poems are pervaded by courtly love of the sort Sir Philip Sidney describes in his *Arcadia* and his *Astrophel and Stella*. And unquestionably Ford's early reading and writing tremendously influenced his later dramatic career. Yet the stubborn fact remains that, after a twenty-year period of indifferent literary production, he suddenly commenced, about 1628, to write a series of outstanding plays not only reminiscent of his first literary efforts but replete with identical issues then causing a sharp exchange of opinion in city and court.

These issues grew out of Henrietta Maria's Platonic love cult, which sprang up in court during Ford's independent dramatic career. Intent upon "purifying" manners and morals, the Queen and her group presented through court masks and plays romantic ideas of marriage and love which aroused immediate Puritan ire. As early as 1628, when the cult was just beginning to take shape, Puritans began to attack court manners and morals; and a sharp exchange of opinion ensued, reminiscent of other debates of the time. Now all these debates concerned special issues, such as those of innovations, ship money, or morals; but fundamental in all these exchanges was the issue of individual rights. It may therefore be enlightening to glance first at the general state of affairs in the decade preceding the Wars in order not only to discern the real issues in the general melee but also to observe the growth of bold individualism which modern man now claims for his own.

The debate over Mariolatry in the court of Charles I illustrates excellently the growth of this bold individualism. For the first time in England, at least on a large scale, ordinary individuals began to attack entrenched or-

ganizations and established beliefs, regardless of threats from on high. William Prynne and men of his stamp had no fear of the court; such Puritans, scorning the authority of both Church and State, assailed not only the ritual of Mariolatry but also Queen Henrietta Maria herself, who was its most ardent supporter. The Queen, however, had numerous champions; and, since they in turn attacked those who scorned Mariolatry, a lively passage of arms resounded through England and Scotland.

The position of those favoring Virgin worship in court may be observed in several important tracts of the day. Anthony Stafford's *The Femall Glory*¹ perhaps first brought the main issues before public opinion. In this, as it were, biographical sketch of the Virgin, Stafford contended through more than two hundred pages of commentary and extravagant description that the Virgin's beauty and virtue should command worship; he furthermore argued that because of her beauty and virtue she should receive homage from all devout persons. The anonymous N. N. backed up this position with even more point in *Maria Triumphans*,² a book which presents in dialogue form a defense of this sort of devotion. Through Mariadulus and Mariamastix, N. N. clarifies the main points of contention; Mariadulus defends the worship of Mary on grounds of her miracles and her immaculate conception, while Mariamastix assails all this as being gross, idolatrous sin. Before the dialogue closes, however, N. N. makes it clear which he thinks to have won; he says in effect that Mariamastix, like the Puritan, in assuming such devotion to be idolatrous sin, is an ignorant blockhead, since in truth Virgin worship is holy and in many ways as devout

¹ *The Femall Glory* (London, 1635).

² *Maria Triumphans. Being A Discourse, wherein (by way of Dialogue) the B. Virgin Mary Mother of God, is defended, and vindicated, from all such Dishonours and Indignities, with which the Precisions of these our dayes, are accustomed vniustly to charge her* (1635).

as the worship of God. In the last year of the decade preceding the Wars, R. F. translated Alexis de Salo's lengthy handbook of devotion called *An Admirable Method To Love, Serve and Honour the B. Virgin Mary*.³ Here de Salo attempts to answer the main question why the Virgin Mary should receive worship but fails to marshal issues of any importance. Rather, he lists many examples of how Mary has interceded in the lowly life of man, and describes Heaven as a kind of glorified court where the Virgin is the pure Queen with command over all. Because of this he concludes that men, like courtiers, should bow down before her incomparable beauty and virtue.

Such extravagant descriptions and such Mariolatry drew Puritan fire from all parts of England. In *A Warning To Come Out of Babylon*,⁴ Andrew Ramsay, blasting as a matter of course the pride and corruption of Rome, singles out for specific attack the effects of Mariolatry upon the language of church hymns drawn from the Psalms. First, he expresses fear that the Babylonian Whore may find berth in England; then he reviews evidence supporting that fear by pointing out, among other things, how Bonaventura transformed the Psalms into hymns honoring the Virgin, which changed *God* into *goddess*, *Lord* into *Lady*, and *trust in the Lord* into *trust in the Lady*. Other haters of the Babylonian Whore joined in the attack. Henry Burton, whose famous sermons *For God, and the King* clapped him in prison, refers specifically to Stafford's *The Femall Glory* as a book full of popish ideas; furthermore, he saw even prior to Andrew Ramsay's warning from Babylon the danger of shifting the focus of worship from God to a goddess whom those

³ *An Admirable Method To Love, Serve and Honour the B. Virgin Mary* (1639). Englished by R. F.

⁴ *A Warning To Come Out of Babylon* (Edinburgh, 1638), pp. 21-23.

in court considered greater than God Himself.⁵ In *Englands Complaint To Iesus Christ*, a broadside which challenges popery, the tyranny of bishops, and even Henrietta Maria herself, *The Femall Glory* again appears as a notorious book uttering sheer blasphemy in contending that Mary should be worshiped.⁶

Against such attacks the defenders of Mariolatry mustered their strength and replied with an acrimonious vigor that must have surprised even the Puritans themselves. An anonymous writer, for example, answered Henry Burton's sermons *For God, and the King* section by section, pointing out what he considered to be Burton's main errors. He further queried why Burton should protest against *The Femall Glory*, since he felt that the book contained no language contrary to doctrines established and received by the Church. He therefore asserted that for this very reason Burton lies convicted of ignorance.⁷ Christopher Dow, also answering *For God, and the King*, scored Burton for scurrilous language, inaccuracies, and even treason; in addition to this he contended, without even having glanced at the volume, that *The Femall Glory* could contain no Mariolatry for the simple reason that Stafford had "not digressed in any particular from the Bishop of Chichester."⁸

The debate grew so hot that Stafford himself jumped into the fight, though his defense remained in manuscript form until the controversy no longer held any great interest. Nevertheless his points are worthy of notice. First, he claimed that his own descriptions of Mary, which

⁵ *For God, and the King* (1636), pp. 123-26.

⁶ *Englands Complaint To Iesus Christ, Against The Bishops Canons* (1640), sig. C.

⁷ *The Preface, Shewing the Occasion of This Following Answer, with somewhat of the Storie of H. B. the principall Argument thereof* [1636], pp. 123-24.

⁸ *Innovations Unjustly charged upon the Present Church and State* (London, 1637), p. 54.

Puritans had scored for their extravagance, were in no way idolatrous but merely full of apostrophe. Moreover, Puritans should look to their own faults rather than single out the transgressions of others, and he furnished examples: What about the Puritan who refused to shift his clothes on the Lord's day, or the Precisionist who tried to smother his bees for toiling on Sunday? But he restrained himself from other remarks which might justly be made; and he even persuaded a satirical friend not to carry out his original plan to ridicule Burton, Bastwick, and Prynne.⁹

The nature of rebellion and bold individualism finds further illustration in the Sabbatarian conflict which raged in the years immediately preceding the Wars. Moreover, in this particular debate the issue of authority and of individual rights was suddenly recognized by the men in power themselves. Beginning, apparently, on a high theological plane, which merely reviewed Sabbath uses as explained in the Fourth Commandment, it quickly degenerated into vitriolic exchanges between Puritans and High-churchmen. John Pocklington, for instance, sounded a dignified note in the first part of the exchange by contending that Sunday is not necessarily divine but merely a day set aside for the Church.¹⁰ Furthermore, Christopher Dow continued in much the same way through a more lengthy and technical treatise which traced the use of the Sabbath since Biblical times; and he concluded, because of this historical approach, that on this day works of piety and charity may be done with impunity.¹¹ Francis White also presented the High-churchman's position; but more sharply than any of the others he saw the real issues

⁹ Stafford, *The Life of the Blessed Virgin; Together with the Apology of the Author* (London, 1860). See the "apology."

¹⁰ *Sunday No Sabbath* (London, 1636).

¹¹ *A Discourse Of The Sabbath And The Lords Day* (London, 1636).

involved when he harped upon the Puritan revolt against vested authority. Possibly answering directly William Prynne's *The Lords day, the Sabbath day*,¹² White lamented schism in both Church and State; and with a good deal of point he labeled Prynne an ignorant, scurrilous pamphleteer bent upon destroying traditional power.¹³ Most Puritans, however, evaded the issue of authority and order; they contented their souls by chasing the devil and by dwelling upon the heinous iniquities of Sunday games and amusements. William Prynne, for example, cited how Sunday swimmers often meet death in the Thames and pictured with holy glee how Sabbath imbibers, giddy with wine, often in winter drop to their doom through holes in the ice.¹⁴ George Walker, however, whose Puritanism sent him to prison after a pamphleteer skirmish with Francis White, was unable to see all Sabbath breaking in the same unchanging light. He strongly urged complete observance of God's holy day; yet he sanctioned work done in honor of God, such as basting meat which will nourish some preacher whose doctrine is sound.¹⁵ Thus in the clash of opinion each side presented its case without favor or fear.

But in the group Francis White alone recognized clearly the real issues involved. He observed with concern the growing power of individual rights, which threatened to undermine the authority of rank and the strength of old institutions.

What Francis White feared soon came to pass; au-

¹² *The Lords day, the Sabbath day* (1636).

¹³ *An Examination and Confutation of a Lawlesse Pamphlet, Intituled, A briefe Answer to a Late Treatise of the Sabbath-Day: Digested Dialogue-wise betweene two divines, A and B* (London, 1637), p. 160.

¹⁴ *A Divine Tragedie Lately Acted, Or A Collection of sundry memorable examples of Gods judgements upon Sabbath-breakers . . .* (1636). This book consists of case studies, all of them like the two cited.

¹⁵ *The Doctrine Of The Sabbath* (Amsterdam, 1639).

thority and rank soon crumbled and fell. But before its downfall is depicted, another debate demands detailed attention in order that John Ford's background may be more thoroughly covered. Perhaps sharper than even the conflicts described, though all were a part of the same pattern, was the debate over Archbishop Laud's ill-fated attempt to establish a uniform church ritual throughout England. All during John Ford's independent dramatic career Laud labored in vain to make parishioners face east toward the altar, kneel at the mention of Christ's name, and perform other such rites; but Puritans sensed in such actions popish idolatry and therefore struck back at Laud through pamphlets and broadsides. The conflict over bowing at the mention of Christ's name probably received as much attention as any one particular rite; at least, this seemingly innocuous requirement brought forth a stream of arguments *pro* and *con*. Prynne and Henry Burton began the attack by assailing John Cosin's *A Collection Of Private Devotions*,¹⁶ a book which turned out to be a sort of manual of court worship. They sneer at courtiers and ladies-in-waiting who take time from their courtly pleasures and ease to follow the idolatrous rites for which this manual called.¹⁷ In much the same vein, though in possibly more colorful language, Peter Smart pointed to altar-cringings at Durham; moreover, he made it perfectly clear that such genuflections are sinful in the eyes of both God and man.¹⁸ Giles Widdowes attempted to answer these men by appealing to Church law and authority;¹⁹ on grounds of institutional rights he sought to justify in general the whole Anglican ritual and in par-

¹⁶ *A Collection Of Private Devotions* (London, 1627).

¹⁷ Prynne, *A Briefe Survey And Censure Of Mr Cozens His Couzening Deuotions* (London, 1628); Burton, *A Tryall Of Private Devotions. Or, A Diall For The Houres of Prayer* (London, 1628).

¹⁸ *A Short Treatise of Altars, Altar-furniture, Altar-cringing, and Musick of all the Quire, Singing-men and choristers . . .* (1629).

¹⁹ *The Schismatical Puritan* (Oxford, 1630).

ticular bowing at the name of Jesus. But William Prynne would have none of this argument; instead, he refuted Widdowes' position in connection with "cringing" at Christ's name by referring as usual to Scripture.²⁰ Furthermore, accusing Widdowes of egregious errors and calling him names, he dragged the controversy down to the level of personal abuse. In turn Widdowes replied in unwonted anger that not he, but Prynne himself, had erred.²¹ At this point, William Page entered the lists in support of the "lame and halting" Giles Widdowes; he championed the right of traditional worship, which he claimed to be more worthy of attention than Prynne and his numerous errors.²² Strong words continued to flow, through the period before Marston Moor, until both verse and prose satire took up the cry, scenting out the ridiculous and the ironic which such controversies naturally leave in their paths. Behold, exclaimed an unknown but keen-sighted writer, England lies deep in genuine sin; yet the prelates are troubled by such trivial matters as bowing at the mention of Christ's name. Furthermore, these same prelates bemoan schism and cry for Church union, and then what do they do? They promote all sorts of divisions by slicing men's ears from their heads!²³ When the controversy over bowing at the naming of Christ reached this state, it was ready to stop; it would possibly have died by itself had not the Wars effectively killed it.

²⁰ *Lame Giles His Haultings Or, A Briefe Survey Of Giles Widdowes His Confutation of an Appendix, concerning Bowing at the name of Jesus* (1630).

²¹ *The Lawlesse Kneesse Schismaticall Puritan* (Oxford, 1631).

²² *A Treatise or Iustification of Bowing at The Name of Iesus. By way of Answer to an appendix against it. Together with an Examination of such considerable reasons as are made by Mr Prinne in a reply to Mr Widdowes concerning the same argument* (Oxford, 1631).

²³ See *A Very Lively Portrayture, Of The Most Reverend Archbishops, The Right Reverend Bs. Of The Chorch Of England* (1640); and John Taylor, *Differing Worships, Or, The Oddes, betweene some Knights Service and God's* (London, 1640).

Now these controversies, all of which were a part of the general Puritan-Anglican conflict, no longer of themselves command very much interest, nor do they represent fully the growth of unbridled individualism in the seventeenth century. Debates concerning the Star Chamber and ship money illustrate just as concisely the flourishing belief in individual rights. The particular exchanges described, however, are adequate for the present study of John Ford in that they show an important change then taking place in man's mind; moreover, together with numerous other exchanges, they gave rise to the idea that controversy in the long run could solve any problem. Indeed, as the pamphlet war grew intense, mingling purple patches with bombast, ignorance with profound learning, and dilettantism with pedantry in a great medley of voices, the hope suddenly emerged that the truth at last might be found should men merely have time to see issues from all points of view.²⁴ This hope gave further sanction to the gospel of individualism itself, and as a consequence blind respect for tradition and trust in old institutions ceased to motivate men as before. In 1645, for instance, plain Stuart citizens killed Archbishop Laud; and in 1649, one cold winter morning, the head of King Charles rolled from the block. These forthright methods employed by the middle-class revolution dissolved ancient fears of Church power and of divine kingly right; from now on, debate and Prynne's bold individualism, not authority and Archbishop Laud's institutional rights, set the mold of the future.

Such debates, together with the faith in individual rights which began to spring from them, make the clash over issues of marriage and love take on a significance hitherto unrevealed. Heretofore coteries of love had been the concern of small, courtly circles; Renaissance son-

²⁴ See William Haller, *Tracts on Liberty in the Puritan Revolution* (Columbia University Press, 1934), I, 7-8.

neteers, for example, wrote for relatively small groups. But when Henrietta Maria proposed ideals of marriage and love inimical to Puritan beliefs, a conflict arose the issues of which could be resolved only by an exchange of individual opinion. For this reason, romantic ideals of courtship and love, though abundantly evident in the works of Spenser, Lyly, and Sidney, assume during Ford's time the singular importance of being weighed in the scales of public debate. As a result, ideals which in earlier ages had seemed remote from everyday life now became problems of common concern.

II

The conflict over matters of marriage and love came to a head not long after Henrietta Maria landed in England as the bride of Charles I. To be sure, such topics had long been the concern of many Puritan divines; in fact, they had worked out an art of love²⁵ as full of detail as that code of courtly *amour* which Andreas Capellanus had assembled for the medieval world. But until the Queen's arrival in England no organized group had seriously challenged what these divines had been long expounding in sermons and pamphlets. Now, however, the picture suddenly changed. A Catholic Queen, whom Puritans instinctively hated, promulgated through a coterie of Platonic love a system of manners and morals which directly opposed Puritan ways and beliefs; and in consequence, as might be expected, a sharp conflict arose over questions of marriage and love. Curiously, however, in this special debate the Puritans took sides with tradition—and the court for once argued complete individualism. Puritans contended for marital relations which, however familiar, appear to modern sophisticates uninspired and

²⁵ See William and Mallevalle Haller, "The Puritan Art of Love," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, V (1942), 235-72. This excellent article presents the details of Puritan ideals in marriage and love.

old-fashioned; on the other hand, the court coterie presented a philosophy of life which the "emancipated" mind of the present would be quick to endorse. The details of this conflict, however, may await a later discussion; it is of importance now to establish the coterie's origin and existence in court and to record its manners and morals.

The immediate origins of Henrietta Maria's Platonic coterie are not hard to find. Since the young Queen lived in the French court before she became the bride of Charles I, she no doubt fell under the influence of the Hôtel de Rambouillet,²⁶ a sort of soirée group established by Catherine de Vivonne, who herself had apparently read widely for her tenets of beauty and love in D'Urfé's *L'Astrée*.²⁷ Since D'Urfé had brought together in five tedious volumes nearly the whole of the pastoral tradition, the young Queen featured in her new English court ideals of beauty and love reminiscent of the sonnets of Petrarch, of sixteenth-century Italian pastorals, of Spanish romances, of French Renaissance poetry and prose, and even of tales of medieval chivalry.²⁸ These ideals soon began to be buzzed about and debated as matters of utmost importance; and shortly various forms of literature began to reflect the discussion. By 1629, for example, Ben Jonson's *The New Inn* presented the practices and several beliefs of the group through the remarks of various characters. Lady Frances Frampul, for instance, thinks nothing a felicity but to have a multitude of "servants" and to be called "mistress" by them;²⁹ Lovel explains that love is an affection most noble and pure, a desire for

²⁶ Jefferson Butler Fletcher, *The Religion of Beauty in Woman, and Other Essays on Platonic Love in Poetry and Society* (New York, 1911), p. 27.

²⁷ Bernard Germa, *L'Astrée d'Honoré D'Urfé: Sa Composition—son influence* (Paris, 1904), p. 228.

²⁸ Kathleen M. Lynch, *The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy* (New York, 1926), pp. 45-46.

²⁹ *The Works of Ben Jonson* (London, 1875), V, 304.

what is truly beautiful and fair, a yearning to make two persons one in spirit, the mind being affected before the flesh is aroused.³⁰ Somewhat later, Prudence, another character, designates this love as "Platonic" in the court where Lovel had explained the doctrine.³¹ In 1631-32 Peter Housted, in his preface to *The Rivall Friends*, apparently alludes to the coterie when he declares that women, "taken out of the Ore," are "refin'd and wrought" into a "degree of *purity* by the *court*."³² On January 9, 1632-33, the Queen and her ladies produced, after much preparation and comment, Walter Montague's *The Shepheard's Paradise*, a long windy play which molds into dramatic form the main rules of Platonic discipline;³³ and in a letter dated June 3, 1634, James Howell describes briefly the vogue which by now had become firmly established in court:

The Court affords little News at present, but that there is a Love call'd Platonick Love, which much sways there of late; it is a Love abstracted from all corporeal gross Impressions and sensual Appetite, but consists in Contemplations and Ideas of the Mind, not in any carnal Fruition. This Love sets the Wits of the Town on work; and they say there will be a Mask shortly of it, whereof Her Majesty and her Maids of Honour will be part.³⁴

The mask alluded to here is generally believed to have been D'Avenant's *The Temple of Love*, a play which makes it clear that the Queen and her ladies planted the "new sect" on a "dull northern isle" called "Britaine" and that, though such love strangely found "birth and nourishment in Court," it soon became fully accepted:

³⁰ *Ibid.*, V, 366-68.

³¹ *Ibid.*, V, 371.

³² *The Rivall Friends* (London, 1632), sig. A3v.

³³ *The Shepheard's Paradise* (London, 1629 [1659]). See Lynch, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

³⁴ *Epistolae Ho-Eliaenae* (London, 1890), I, 317-18.

Certain young Lords at first disliked the philosophy
 As most uncomfortable, sad, and new;
 But soon inclin'd to a superior vote,
 And are grown as good Platonical lovers
 As are to be found in an hermitage, where he
 That was born last reckons above fourscore.³⁵

Just how "uncomfortable, sad, and new" these ideals of the coterie appeared to young lords in the court is not a matter of record; it is evident, however, that what the coterie stood for considerably influenced literature and life during the reign of Henrietta Maria. Habington, Carew, Suckling, Herbert of Cherbury, Cartwright, George Daniel, and Cowley wrote verse concerning the doctrine; Waller composed letters of compliment to Sacharissa, the wife of Lord Spencer;³⁶ and traces of such Platonism appear in translations and imitations of French romances.³⁷ Later, groups modeled after the Queen's coterie sprang up in courts of minor importance; Lucy Hay, for example, followed in the Queen's tracks, along with Margaret Cavendish and the "Matchless Orinda."³⁸ All these manifestations employ the jargon of the coterie and describe in some measure its manners and morals; but court plays and masks present the most complete picture of what the Queen tried to establish in England. Indeed, many court plays were written for the specific purpose of making clear the philosophy of the cult. Because of this it is safe to compile the code of love of the cult from the dramas written and given in court between the arrival of Henrietta Maria and the close of the theaters. The fol-

³⁵ *The Dramatic Works of Sir William D'Avenant* (London, 1872-1874), I, 293-94.

³⁶ See *Court and Society from Elizabeth to Anne* (ed. Duke of Manchester, London, 1864), I, 352.

³⁷ Ernest A. Baker, *The History of the English Novel* (London, 1924-1929), III, 28.

³⁸ Alfred Horatio Upham, *The French Influence in English Literature from the Accession of Elizabeth to the Restoration* (New York, 1908), pp. 350 ff.

lowing code, derived from this drama, attempts to put into analytical form the rites and beliefs which may be considered central in the "new" philosophy of the young Queen.³⁹

Fate rules all lovers. Platonic drama in court insists that fate rules all lovers. This belief in the power of fate, however, is not to be identified with the notion of scientific determinism found in the four-humours doctrine, though it must be admitted that the two ideas perhaps had a common origin in medieval treatises on love. In seventeenth-century moral philosophy, particularly in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, the idea of inevitability had been attributed to impersonal forces; but in Queen Henrietta Maria's coterie, whose manners and morals stemmed from a literature rich in classical allusions, necessity donned the robes of gods and controlling deities in the old pagan sense. In *The Unfortunate Lovers*, for example, Ascoli feels compelled to marry fair Arthiopa simply because the powers above have decreed it, a decision which he believes no earthly desire can dissuade or alter.⁴⁰ Furthermore, in *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, Dorinda considers herself "thrust" in love by her "Fate" and admits that the gods have so directed her passion that she can exercise no control over the path it shall follow.⁴¹ Fortunately, both Dorinda and Ascoli found their heart's true desires through the action of fate. But when the gods decreed unrequited affection, Platonic lovers rent the air with their cries. Despite such heart-wringing laments, however, they always accepted what fate had ordained;⁴²

³⁹ This code has been assembled from an examination of all plays and masks written and given in court between 1625 and 1642 as listed in Mary Susan Steele's *Plays & Masques at Court* (New Haven, 1926).

⁴⁰ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, III, 33.

⁴¹ J[oseph] R[utter], *The Shepherds Holy-Day* (London, 1635), sigs. B5v-B6.

⁴² T[homas] G[offe], *The Careles Shepherdess* (London, 1656), pp. 28-29.

indeed, there was no escaping what the gods had already recorded. In *The Deserving Favourite*, for instance, Lysander presses his love for Clarinda by arguing that their union was written down long ago in the great book of doom.⁴³ All through Platonic drama, in fact, the notion that fate rules all lovers appears with such insistence that the idea must be taken as one of the cardinal tenets of the coterie.⁴⁴

Beauty and goodness are one and the same. Court drama so often stressed the relation between beauty and goodness that possibly for this reason alone the coterie became known as "Platonic." In any event, courtiers and ladies believed that a beautiful body was certain evidence of a beautiful soul. In *The Unfortunate Lovers*, for instance, Rampino recognizes Amaranta because

The beauty of her mind shines in her face:
For she is good as fair,⁴⁵

Furthermore, in *Albions Triumph* and in *Tempe Restord*, Aurelian Townshend, a close courtly friend of the Queen, summarizes this basic belief in a reference to Henrietta Maria herself. First, he states that the Queen's native beauties correspond to "all Purity and Whitenesse";⁴⁶ then he commands the court to observe her "Corporeall Beauty, consisting in simetry, colour, and certaine vnexpressable Graces"; and finally he brings in the Platonic doctrine by contending that such outward beauty should draw man "to the contemplation of the *Beauty* of the

⁴³ Charles H. Gray, *Lodowick Carliell* (Chicago, 1905), II, 1016-17 in *The Deserving Favourite*.

⁴⁴ In *The Shepherd's Paradise* fate guides nearly every move. See pp. 60, 65, 80, 87, 94, 101, and 158. See also Lynch, *op. cit.*, p. 47; Upham, *op. cit.*, p. 310. Cf. *L'Astrée* (Lyon, 1926), II, 317, "Le Ciel l'a voulu, car c'est par destin que je l'ayme."

⁴⁵ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, III, 17.

⁴⁶ *Aurelian Townshend's Poems and Masks*, ed. E. K. Chambers (Oxford, 1912), p. 57.

soule, vnto which it hath Analogy."⁴⁷ Other courtiers went beyond this basic belief; they argued not only that beauty of body possesses analogy to beauty of soul but also that a beautiful form invariably indicates a virtuous mind. Thus in *The Careles Shepherdess*, Philaritus boldly asserts that chaste looks "cannot be counterfeit"; hence Arismena can be "No Imposter," her beauties being "Symptoms of what lies treasur'd in the heart";⁴⁸ and in *The Shepherd's Paradise*, Genorio recognizes the virtue of Fidamira's soul chiefly because goodness gives her face a "colour" of "loveliness" which is evident even through her disguise as a Moor.⁴⁹ Accordingly, since Fidamira's face is lovely to look upon, she must of necessity possess a beautiful soul. Now as a result of this notion courtly playwrights created heroines of incomparable beauty and grace; and in turn, because of their matchless perfections, Platonic women became paragons of goodness and virtue.⁵⁰

A glance at the way coterie members described their beautiful women will indicate how much they believed in this Platonic relation. Platonic heroines invariably appear to be "matchlesse";⁵¹ they embody "all the beauty in the world"⁵² and naturally enough thereby become very miracles of all perfection.⁵³ Furthermore, their beauty in-

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁴⁸ *The Careles Shepherdess*, p. 17.

⁴⁹ *The Shepherd's Paradise*, p. 48.

⁵⁰ D'Urfé also romantically associates the beautiful with the good: "This theory of the close connection between love and beauty is given very definitely in his philosophical work, *Les Epistres morales* where he insists that 'love is a desire of beauty; beauty and goodness are mingled together, for nothing can be beautiful which is not good, nor good which is not beautiful'." See Sister Mary Catharine McMahon, *Aesthetics and Art in the Astrée of Honoré D'Urfé* (Washington, 1925), p. 54.

⁵¹ *The Plays and Poems of Henry Glaphorne* (London, 1874), I, 65.

⁵² *The Shepherd's Paradise*, p. 33.

⁵³ [John Suckling], *Aglaure* (London, 1638), p. 29.

spires comparisons which soar above mundane limits; they become goddesses, with beauty "transcendent."⁵⁴ Such descriptions as these would seem extravagant enough to satisfy the most enthusiastic coterie playwrights; but, far from resting content with these general terms, they felt happiest when they had filled in the bare outline with rich strokes of color until description beggared the object. Illustrative of this is Lycicles' praise of Milesia in *The Lost Lady*:

No: she is white as Lillies, as the Snow
That falls upon PARNASSVS; if the Red were here,
As I have seene't enthron'd, the rising day
Would get new excellence by being compar'd to her:
ARGOS, nor CYPRVS, AEGYPT never saw
A beauty like to this⁵⁵

Now it goes without saying, in view of the doctrine, that because of Milesia's beauty her soul is therefore as white as the snow; and the same holds true for other Platonic heroines whom coterie playwrights pictured in terms as replete with hyperbole. Oramont's beautiful sister, for example, must be pure; in fact, Amadore declares her to be as pure as first-created light and as sweet as new-spreading buds or flowers never touched by human hands.⁵⁶ But however lush Amadore's declarations may seem, his picture of Oramont's sister pales in comparison with Theander's descriptions of his mistress, Eurithea. This beautiful woman receives from Theander a complete bill of spiritual health for the simple reason that her body is fair:

⁵⁴ *The Shepherd's Paradise*, p. 28.

⁵⁵ [Sir William Berkeley], *The Lost Lady* (London, 1638), p. 44. See also McMahon, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-62. In *L'Astrée* women also possess exquisite beauty: their golden hair, snowy necks, sparkling eyes, teeth of ivory, and musical voices make them paragons of perfection.

⁵⁶ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, IV, 248.

And thou, my love, art sweeter far
 Than balmy incense in the purple smoke;
 Pure and unspotted, as the cleanly ermine ere
 The hunter sullies her with his pursuit;
 Soft as her skin, chaste as th'Arabian bird,
 That wants a sex to woo, or as the dead
 That are divorc'd from warmth, from objects,
 And from thought.⁵⁷

Now it is only natural that such a paragon of beauty and virtue should be considered divine; indeed, coterie playwrights often related their heroines to saints whom they seemed so much to resemble. Thus in *The Shepherd's Paradise*, Fidamira, whose wishes are "cleare from any stain,"⁵⁸ appears "Saint-like,"⁵⁹ and fair Bellesa is "divine";⁶⁰ and Chrisea, in *The Ladies Priviledge*, wears robes of "Divinest beauty."⁶¹ This association of divinity with beauty and virtue ran through the warp and woof of Platonic drama; and as a consequence, beautiful women, because of their divinity and unspotted souls, commanded from lovers devout homage and worship.

Beautiful women are saints to be worshiped. The power of beauty and virtue has long been recognized in the stream of Platonic writings. Spenser's Una, for instance, fixed a lion with her eye and then went on about her business of holiness. This is no mean performance; but coterie women would doubtless have considered Una's achievement to be of little significance. For these goddesses in Platonic drama controlled the ambitions and passions of men, which is an accomplishment of much more importance. Thus, in *The Passionate Lovers*, Clorinda's beauteous form smites Cleon with such strength

⁵⁷ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, II, 34-35.

⁵⁸ *The Shepherd's Paradise*, p. 17.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁶¹ Henry Glapthorne, *The Ladies Priviledge* (London, 1640), sigs. DIV-D2.

that his hope of gaining great kingdoms and states disappears before the desire to possess her "personal/Beauty."⁶² Agenor, in the same play, falls prostrate before the identical power. Although he admits that he owes Austella obeisance because she is the "daughter of a King," he swiftly explains that he bows down not merely because she holds this position but because her "beauty" has erected in his heart a "greater monarchy" that commands him to kneel at her feet.⁶³ As a result of this power of beauty and virtue, Platonic women assumed in a real sense the status of goddesses or saints at whose shrines men knelt in adoration and worship.

Such worship appears again and again throughout co-terie drama. In *The Deserving Favourite*, for instance, the Duke offers up his complete "life and fortunes" before the "blest shrine" of his "Goddesse" Clarinda.⁶⁴ In *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, Hylas becomes a "most religious votary" to the "white Innocence" of his goddess Nerina;⁶⁵ and Thyrsis, in the same play, so adoringly worships his saint Sylvia that he cannot bring himself even to "touch" her for fear of profaning the temple.⁶⁶ Sometimes these saints descended from their high niches of worship to declare their own love to their votaries prostrate before them; but more often, at least in theory if not in actual practice, they stayed remote and aloof. Such coldness, however, caused no surcease in adoring language and thoughts. Thus Cratander in *The Royall Slave* immolates himself upon Atossa's shrine knowing full well that for the time being she will never allow him to quench his flames of desire in the clear stream of her beauty. Yet he feels that this is as it should be. For Atossa, he reasons, is "one Body of perfection" and therefore partakes of the

⁶² Lodowick Carlell, *The Passionate Lovers* (London, 1655), Pt. I, p. 23.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶⁴ *The Deserving Favourite*, ll. 815-17.

⁶⁵ *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, sig. C4. ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, sig. B2v.

"Deity"; hence she possesses the right to spurn his devotion. Whatever may happen, all he can hope for is that she will allow him to continue his worship.⁶⁷ In *The Jealous Lovers*, Tyndarus illustrates even more clearly this attitude of lowliness of Platonic lovers. He feels that he must first cleanse his own mind before performing the rites—it is "Atheisme" and "foul sin" to bow down in devotion when he entertains the suspicion that the "devil" may be "lodg'd" in his goddess Evadne. Hence he clears his mind of such unseemly notions by arguing on Platonic grounds that her soul must be as beauteous as her face, and that for this reason her

glorious outside which all eyes adore,
Is but the fair shrine of a fairer saint.⁶⁸

His conscience thus cleared, Tyndarus commences his worship in earnest. In *A Fine Companion*, Spruse's courtship of Valeria brings together the whole of this devotional practice. It must be admitted that Spruse may be speaking with his tongue in his cheek; but, satire or no, here is the ritual, complete with its rhetoric, its ideas of the power of beauty, and its notion of lowly subjection:

Now by that sacred shrine, brighter then *Venus*.
To whom I pay my *Orizons*: that forme
That faire Idea, that rules all my thoughts,
Thy selfe I meane, that spotlesse seat of pleasure:
The continent of all perfection,
This spring of loue, that issues from my soule.
Runnes in a streame as pure, as are your vertues,
Full fraught with zeale, immaculate and free
From all adulterate mixtures.⁶⁹

Though Spruse may have been accused of making fun of what cult members practiced with solemn devotion, he

⁶⁷ William Cartwright, *The Royall Slave* (Oxford, 1639), sig. E4v.

⁶⁸ *The Jealous Lovers*, p. 6.

⁶⁹ Shakerley Marmyon, *A Fine Companion* (London, 1633), sig. E4.

cannot be censured for having failed to grasp the essentials of coterie worship.

Now apparently coterie members performed such rites by means of daily devotions. Thyrsis, for example, confesses his diurnal worship,⁷⁰ and Pamphilus is recorded as paying his "morning orisons" at Techmessa's window as "Duly as at the Temple."⁷¹ There is no reason to disbelieve such claims; in fact, if Thyrsis and Pamphilus erred, it was because they paid strict attention to their own love affairs and failed to observe what their companions were doing. For in coterie drama Platonic lovers so often knelt down before beautiful women that it would seem they solemnized this rite almost on the hour. Worship of woman is one of the most outstanding disciplines of the Platonic cult.⁷²

True love is of equal hearts and divine. The worship of beautiful women naturally aroused many questions as to the meaning of love; as a result, coterie members spent long hours arguing whether true love is of the body or of the soul. In *The Temple of Love*, D'Avenant explains that the "new sects of Love" in court stress that man should woo woman's mind, not her flesh; then he goes on to say that true love practices generation of souls, not reproduction in the physical sense.⁷³ Moreover, in *The Platonic Lovers*, Ariola argues that a union of equal souls brings much greater bliss than the consummation of physical desires.⁷⁴ Whether coterie members practiced this austere conviction is not now a question of moment; but in theory they thought that love should be of the spirit.

⁷⁰ *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, sig. E8.

⁷¹ *The Jealous Lovers*, p. 23.

⁷² See McMahon, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-57. In *L'Astrée*, D'Urfé associates beauty with God; therefore, out of respect for God, beauty must of necessity be worshiped. It thus easily follows that beauty in woman must also be worshiped and that such devotion receives divine approbation.

⁷³ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, I, 292-93.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 78.

In fact, they contended that "True Love is a Spirit extracted out of the whole masse of virtue";⁷⁵ and from here it was easy to take the next step and say that love is divine. So they ended up with the notion that true love comes from the Creator himself⁷⁶ and, because of its origin, joins immortal souls in permanent union.⁷⁷

Yet despite this insistence that true love is of the soul only, Platonics and anti-Platonics fought heated battles over the question of fleshly fruition. In Sir John Suckling's *Aglaura*, such a conflict takes place. Semanthe first argues that the little doubts, frustrations, jealousies, and fears constitute the essence which crowns love with pleasure; and, since this essence is lost when man achieves fleshly indulgence, is it not evident that fruition should never take place? But Orsames, an anti-Platonic, rejects this idea. He readily grants that fears, joys, hopes, and desires, together with doubt and despair, make the essence of love. These uncertain states, furthermore, make courtship and wooing a sport; they are the dogs by which the hares of love are run down. But, as the "little thing" in front of the hounds keeps them straining and eager until they succeed in the chase, so must the thought of full fruition keep man intent until success crowns his passion. At this juncture Orithie backs up Semanthe's position. She feels that Orsames' beliefs would place love and its joys on a level where the dull plowman, or even the dull plowman's horse, could discover its secrets; and she concludes that "soules refin'd" should never allow the "noble flame" of love to "burne out" in mere appetite.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ *The Shepherd's Paradise*, p. 77.

⁷⁶ [Lodowick Carlell], *Arviragus and Philicia* (London, 1639), Pt. II, sig. E8v.

⁷⁷ See *Aglaura*, p. 5, and *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, sig. F2. See also Lynch, *op. cit.*, p. 46. Also, Maurice Magendie (*Du Nouveau sur L'Astrée*, Paris, 1927, p. 212), in systematizing the characteristics of the pastoral novel with particular reference to his study of *L'Astrée*, finds that "*Le véritable amour s'adresse à l'âme.*"

⁷⁸ *Aglaura*, p. 6.

Other issues concerning the nature of love also came up for discussion. In *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, Sylvia refutes Robert Burton's medical approach to questions of love by making it clear that those who consider affection to be a pathological state rather than an experience of the soul will find themselves excluded from its joys and delights. Moreover, she is convinced that "Love is divine," the seed of all things, the "cause of why" men live and the *raison d'être* of all creation; and she confidently states that persons holding other opinions not only are misinformed but also grossly profane the deity of love. Now apparently she had expected Thyrsis, who had followed her argument closely, to refute her position; but instead he enlarges upon it. "Love is divine," he repeats; and the gods reveal themselves through woman's fair form. Hence to worship a beautiful woman is to perform an act of religion which glorifies the gods in the highest. Furthermore, man should neither fear to perform this act of devotion nor attempt to control it because of conventional scruples, for the gods will take care of true lovers who worship sincerely.⁷⁹ Thus to coterie members love was not only of hearts equal and divine; it was sanctioned by heaven, and blessings fell on all devotees who worshiped according to approved rites of the cult.

Love is all-important and all-powerful. It is clear from these tenets that to the Queen and her ladies-in-waiting the supreme achievement in life was to attain the blessings of love; hence in order to assure felicity they made love all-important and all-powerful. Not by tacit consent but by open contention they claimed that all gods were "*Sub-Deities*" to Cupid.⁸⁰ Thus it is not surprising to find Urania attempting to convince her father that she must love Amyntas because "*Cupids will*" must never be questioned. Moreover, she strengthens her argument by

⁷⁹ *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, sig. E8.

⁸⁰ *The Careles Shepherdess*, p. 14.

pointing out that when Venus rides she links the ravenous kite and the mild swan to the same chariot and often yokes together eagles and doves; in short, when Venus "Commands," all things lose their "Antipathie"; and for this reason Urania cannot resist the will of this goddess. As she ends her harangue, she reveals that because of the importance and power of love she will have her way with Amyntas regardless of what her father may think.⁸¹

The power of love is further revealed in *The Shepherd's Paradise*, when Genorio debates with himself over the relative strength of reason and of love. He is not long in concluding that love stands "much above reason";⁸² in all Platonic drama, in fact, other emotions and faculties assume a subordinate place when love takes command.⁸³ But perhaps the most complete statement of love's power appears in Thomas Nabbes's *The Springs Glorie*, where, together with a list of other coterie beliefs, a great part of the doctrine of Platonic love is succinctly explained:

. . . . Venus Deity

Is powerfull over all; and *Ceres* gives
Each that hath being that by which he lives.
Yet many times excesse perverts the end
Of pure intentions; and extreames extend
Their powers to undoe those acts are free
In their owne natures from impuritie.
Love ought to be Platonick, and Divine;
Such as is onely kindled, and doth shine
With beames, that may all darke effects controule
In the refin'd parts of the glorious soule.⁸⁴

⁸¹ *The Poems and Amyntas of Thomas Randolph*, ed. John Jay Parry (New Haven, 1917), pp. 260-61. W. J. Lawrence is convinced that *Amyntas* was given at court (see Steele, *op. cit.*, p. 239).

⁸² *The Shepherd's Paradise*, p. 119.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. [51].

⁸⁴ *The Springs Glorie* (London, 1638), sigs. C2v-C3. This mask may not have been given at court (see Steele, *op. cit.*, p. 271). Concerning the power of love, see Lynch, *op. cit.*, p. 60. Also, see Magen-

Now it was Henrietta Maria's intention that such rites and beliefs should refine court manners and morals; instead, they led the coterie into a sophisticated system of ethics which undermined traditional morality and which declared the gospel of individualism the sole guide to life. True love of souls, for example, became more important than marriage; true love also became the only criterion of virtue, and thus those who possessed it were allowed complete freedom of action or thought. Such points of view, some of which may now be examined in turn, appear so often in Platonic drama that they may be considered as basic in the thought which animated the Queen's cult of love.

True love is more important than marriage. It must be admitted that coterie drama exalted the divine state of marriage and that many plays ended with happy epithalamiums. Nevertheless the coterie's notions of fate and its contention that true love is divine led to the casuistic view that marriage itself is not of primary importance. Indeed, cult members stoutly maintained that true love should always prevail regardless of custom and law; and they argued again and again that the soul is supreme whatever convention may say. Thus, in *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, Nerina concludes that her marriage with Daphnis, whom she cannot love in her soul, will result in only "impure delights"; and Dorinda presses this point home by contending that marital ties have nothing to do with true love. "The Lawes," she states firmly, "have not to doe with that which is/Seal'd and recorded in the Court of Heaven."⁸⁵ This separation of true love from marriage, along with the assertion that love of souls should always prevail, made it easy for cult devotees to

die, *op. cit.*, p. 211. Here Magendie finds that love is all-powerful in pastoral novels, particularly in connection with *L'Astrée*: "*L'amour est un dieu tout-puissant, qui règne en maître sur les cœurs.*"

⁸⁵ *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, sig. C7.

conclude that marriage itself is a "needless charge," provided that "souls are wedded";⁸⁶ and soon this casuistry became so firmly established that to some members marriage seemed nothing else than an offense protected by law.⁸⁷ Thus the keeping of marriage vows and the prospect of making them were problems of little concern: the significant questions were whether true love prevailed and whether "soul-mates" could join themselves in spiritual union.

But in arguing for spiritual union the coterie fell into many curious practices in human relations. Since its members believed marriage to be inferior to true love of souls, they exalted relations of pure spiritual essence and looked down upon physical contact; but, since they also were human, by way of compensation they accorded themselves unusual rights. Platonic lovers, for example, might make a great show of affection so long as they kept carnal fruition from entering their minds; but those who contemplated the due consummation of marital joys were denied innocent human relations. In *The Platonic Lovers*, Fredeline gives the details of this rather preposterous notion. First, he describes the free affections of Eurithea, a Platonic lover, and the shy bashfulness of Ariola, who contemplates marriage; then he makes it clear why these two women act in such different ways when they greet their lovers home from the wars. Eurithea and Theander, he explains, are lovers of a "pure/Coelestial kind, such as some style Platonical"; therefore when the two meet they may fondle and kiss with a great show of affection. But Ariola may scarcely vouchsafe Phylomont a glance or a word, since in marriage they seek complete consummation. Not content to let the case rest here, Fredeline next points out how this last is a rather disgusting relation which libertines designate "lust" and which "cold divines"

⁸⁶ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, II, 42.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 45.

conventionally name marriage.⁸⁸ Moreover, the unseemliness of marriage emerges again when Phylomont asks Theander for Ariola's hand. On this solemn occasion Theander informs Phylomont that, although such a request is entirely within the law, it nevertheless is not "comely";⁸⁹ and he suggests that Phylomont reduce his "reason to a cleaner sense" and think in a "noble way," as he himself has done in his Platonic love for Eurithea. It is quite possible that D'Avenant constructed this scene for the specific purpose of satirizing the system of Platonic love; in fact, *The Platonic Lovers* may be considered as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the code. Of main interest at this juncture, however, is the fact that cult devotees considered true love of greater importance than marriage.

Thus in the coterie the institution of marriage no longer commanded a great deal of respect, and, as a natural result, women sought the position of mistress rather than the status of wife. For if a beautiful woman set herself up as a shrine to be worshiped, man offered her service and gave her a taste of true love of souls; but if she committed herself to wifedom and home, man scorned her lowly position and soon ceased to bestow upon her the courtesies of courtship and love. In *The Careles Shepherdess*, Castarina summarizes this point of view. She claims that "being married" makes woman lose her "price and value" but as long as she remains free from entangling marital bonds men not only "poure forth" their "service" but also study "new wayes of devotion."⁹⁰ She therefore intends to remain free so that she may enjoy the fruits of Platonic worship. On the other hand, men argued that the very ties of marriage gave them unusual freedom to pursue their secret affairs. In *The Queene of Arragon*, for instance, Sanmartino assures Cleantha that his being

⁸⁸ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, II, 17.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 43.

⁹⁰ *The Careles Shepherdess*, p. 15.

married will lend "safety" to their clandestine love;⁹¹ and Ergasto, in *The Lost Lady*, frankly admits that there are "No greater Libertines than married men." Then he goes on to list the privileges which men in this state enjoy. First, he agrees with Sanmartino that marriage lends secrecy to affairs of the heart that otherwise might have been hard to secure; next, he points out in effect how his wife gives him entrée into homes where, as a single man, he could not have found such easy access.⁹² In this way marriage became a mere screen to hide the clandestine loves of philandering husbands.

But the prestige of the marital state sank even lower than this. Several adherents of the Platonic doctrine attacked the whole institution as a tedious custom which, unless it sponsored true love of souls, should be completely ignored. Thus in *The Jealous Lovers*, Pamphilus not only declares his intention to disregard the custom of marriage but also threatens to undermine the marital system, if its ceremonies fail to comply with his personal whims:

If out of spight thou crosse me, know, weak godhead,
I'll teach mankind a custome that shall bring
Thy altars to neglect. Lovers shall couple,
As other creatures, —freely, and ne're stand
Upon the tedious ceremonie —Marriage:
And then thou Priest mayst starve.⁹³

The threat of Pamphilus hardly exaggerates the coterie's conception of marriage; rather, it summarizes a crystalized point of view which logically grew from the worship of beauty and the belief in true love of souls, and suggests that this love become the standard of courtly thought and behavior.

⁹¹ [William Habington], *The Queene of Arragon* (London, 1640), sig. Biv. Sanmartino is a "halfe witted Lord"; but he nevertheless echoes coterie beliefs in this statement.

⁹² *The Lost Lady*, p. 6.

⁹³ *The Jealous Lovers*, p. 81.

True love is the sole guide to virtue. However little respect the Queen's coterie had for conventional marriage, its members nevertheless demanded strict adherence to its own code of love. Moreover, they set up this code as the sole guide to virtue and by this measure evaluated all their actions and thoughts. Consequently they believed it sin to break the laws of the code; and at the same time they condoned what ordinarily passes for sin simply because their standards allowed them to look upon such transgressions with hearty approval.

This oblique standard of ethics, which sprang naturally from the Queen's conception of beauty and love, appears throughout Platonic drama. In *The Shepherd's Paradise*, Genorio feels himself "tainted" because he has failed to make good his oaths of true love;⁹⁴ furthermore, Fidamira condemns him for this "break in faith" and lets it be known that he has committed a sin. Yet Genorio defends his moral defection by contending that it should be considered no crime to raise up "devotion" to a more "glorious saint"; and in the end his decision obtains. This exact situation arises again in *The Passionate Lovers* when Austella accuses Agenor of being "tainted in his faith" for having shifted his vows to another beautiful woman. But in this instance Agenor makes no defense for himself; instead, his friend Clorinda steps up to contend that

A change produc'd by such perfection,
Is not to be esteem'd inconstancie, but wisdom.⁹⁵

Now from these two examples it would seem that coterie members easily broke their own code when it proved convenient to do so; other instances show the same disregard for "inviolable" vows. But according to coterie thinking only an apparent breach had occurred, as both Fidamira and Austella were fully advised. For the code allowed

⁹⁴ *The Shepherd's Paradise*, p. 83.

⁹⁵ *The Passionate Lovers*, Pt. II, p. 117.

a shift of affection from one soul to another, provided the second soul possessed more beauty and virtue. Of chief importance, however, is the fact that the coterie measured all conduct by its own code of ethics; its members seldom refer to conventional law. A "taint" came from a break in their own set of values; a crime arose from not pursuing individual desires.

Guided by such a standard, Platonics naturally condoned many actions and thoughts which custom not only frowns upon but frankly condemns. Secret meetings, for example, at which Platonic lovers wooed according to the rites of the cult, received their full approbation; clandestine affairs could promote no "intent of sin" in their eyes.⁹⁶ Even assignations which smacked of adultery appeared chaste and pure if their makers loved with their souls. Thus, in *The Queene of Arragon*, Cleantha urges Oniate to pursue his affections for Floriana, even though she be married; and she assures Floriana herself that such love will bring no blush of shame to her face, because the coterie sanctions this sort of game. In short, the code will allow both Oniate and Floriana complete freedom in affairs of the heart:

Yes deere *Floriana*.

Yet neither danger to thy chastitie,

Nor blemish to thy fame. Custome approves it.⁹⁷

This complete approval of what convention ordinarily judges to be wrong finds even better expression in D'Avenant's *The Fair Favourite*. The King, apparently motivated by the freedom Platonics allow, wonders how his Queen will react when she learns of his mistress, Eumena; but the Queen quickly allays his fears by contending that wrong lies in his ethical scruples, not in freely indulging his whim. Furthermore, she actually argues that, since his

⁹⁶ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, III, 123.

⁹⁷ *The Queene of Arragon*, sig. B2v.

love partakes of the divine essence, he may therefore follow his individual desire and still remain chaste and pure:

There is no harm in love; your nicety
Hath wrong'd us both. Peculiar and distinct
Affections are but small derived parts
Of what we call the universal love;
And universal love, undoubtedly,
Must be the best, since 'tis ascrib'd to heaven.
Take, sir, the freedom you desire!⁹⁸

Thus the code of true love fostered the rule of individual desire; and, as a result, individualism, not compliance with conventional law, became synonymous with goodness and virtue. Moreover, this association of goodness with personal freedom developed until the very gospel of individualism itself appeared clothed in robes of absolute right. Moved by this gospel, which they felt to be holy and pure, Platonics pursued paths of conventional sin under the appearance of searching for beauty and truth.

True love allows any liberty of action and thought. Since virtue lay in the cult code and since the code sanctioned complete individualism, Platonics logically argued that any liberty of action or thought is therefore morally pure. At any rate, this is the way the coterie reasoned if Platonic drama is a valid reflection of the group's manners and morals. Sometimes courtly playwrights tried to defend this position by referring to the natural age of the past; they yearned, for example, for that time "nearest to the Gods" when all followed "Natures lawes" and by "instinct" loved her who was "fairest."⁹⁹ Sometimes they merely recognized the chaos into which they had fallen and only implied the virtue of individual freedom. Thus in Shakerley Marmyon's *A Fine Companion*, Aurelio

⁹⁸ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, IV, 255.

⁹⁹ *The Shepherds Holy-Day*, sig. B7v.

justifies his individualism simply because he believes individualism to be the law of life:

And why should I be staid from going to her?
Why should a couetuous eye watch ore that wealth
That is my right, I will goe claime my due,
And justifie the seisure. Why should parents,
That can giue to their children, neither mindes,
Nor yet affections, striue to governe both?
'Tis not justice: yet where should I complaine?
Loue has no barre to pleade at, nor no lawes
To rule vs by, nor Court to judge our cause.¹⁰⁰

Perhaps this is the best statement of the ethical chaos into which the coterie had fallen; for the love about which the Queen and her courtiers prated had no bar to plead at, no laws to go by, and no court where right and wrong might be judged. But, however excellently Aurelio justified his unbridled individualism, he refrains from painting it in extravagant colors of virtue; this task he left to his dramatic companions who felt purified in following their personal whims. Indeed, other characters break vows of true love, taste carnal delights, and pursue open adultery and incest with a feeling of holiness, provided their love springs from beauty and their affection is true love of souls. Several examples of how they sanctified such transgressions of traditional law will reveal how this conception of individual freedom stood at the very center of coterie thought.

Platonics would be constant in love. They referred again and again to vows which they would hold inviolate forever and aye; yet their individualism rebelled against having to keep any contract in love, and they worked out sophistical arguments to justify their breach of solemn agreements. The old notion that beauty should be current coin served well in this justification. In *The Floating*

¹⁰⁰ *A Fine Companion*, sig. F1.

Island, for instance, Amorous informs Morphe that she actually wrongs her beauty by keeping it from the gaze "Of solemne adoration";¹⁰¹ and, in *The Lost Lady*, Philida questions the value of a "whining constancy" that wastes beauty on one servant alone. It would be much better, she feels, for this gift of beauty to procure the "Vowes, Sacrifice, and service of a thousand."¹⁰² Other Platonics seized upon this same idea to explain that love itself should become current coin; or, as they put it, love increases in goodness not by staying at home but by becoming most "communative." In *The Fair Favourite*, the Queen employs this association of virtue and freedom in love in order to exonerate the King's philandering with his mistress, Eumena. She is convinced that the King's love is blameless and pure; therefore she should not selfishly demand that he love her alone, since virtue will burgeon if he lends out his affections to others:

If it were low, and sinful love, I should
Not think it worth my envy or my fear;
If pure and noble, as my strictest faith
Believes, it is too great a treasure to
Be made particular and own'd by me
Alone, since what is good doth still encrease
In merit of that name, by being most
Communative.¹⁰³

In *The Royall Slave* this notion of communative love receives even more detailed explanation. Atossa has given a golden chain to Cratander, the "royal slave" captured by her husband, Arsamnes; and when Arsamnes rebukes her for being thus free in bestowing her gifts, she states that "Love is as free as Fountaine, Aire, or Flower."¹⁰⁴ Then she explains that no matter where she might wish

¹⁰¹ *The Poetical Works of William Strode*, ed. Bertram Dobell (London, 1907), p. 211.

¹⁰² *The Lost Lady*, p. 29.

¹⁰³ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, IV, 264.

¹⁰⁴ *The Royall Slave*, sig. F2.

to bestow her affections she still could be true to her husband; and Arsamnes not only agrees with this specious contention but breaks out into paeans of praise concerning her incomparable virtue:

Thou art still vertuous my *Atossa*, still
Transparent as thy Crystall, but more spotlesse.
Fooles that we are, to thinke the Eye of Love
Must alwayes looke on us. The Vine that climbs
By conjugall Embracements 'bout the Elme,
May with a ring or two perhaps encircle
Some neighbouring bough, and yet this twining prove,
Not the Offence, but Charity of Love.¹⁰⁵

Thus Platonics contended that charity began outside the home; and in consequence they strayed from marital walls with a feeling of increased purification and virtue.

But the story of complete liberty hardly ends here. Convinced of the holiness of personal whim, Platonics tasted joys that involved more than the soul and characteristically found reasons for seeking such pleasure. In *The Shepheards Holy-Day*, Mirtillus longs for the "heavenly" life of the court where a mistress may satisfy a lover's "spiritual" longings without Hymen's consent;¹⁰⁶ and in *Arviragus and Philicia* the hero contends that since he and Philicia are united in soul they therefore possess the right to be united in body.¹⁰⁷ In *The Jealous Lovers*, Phryne, a "virgin pure and spotlesse,"¹⁰⁸ suggests to Asotus that they "twine and kisse" while their "lips are soft" and their embraces are "warm"; moreover, she believes it a sin for spiritual lovers to pass otherwise the time allotted for "sports."¹⁰⁹ Doria and Chrisea, in *The Ladies Priviledge*, feel that their young spiritual love cannot "conceive a sinne" or commit a "lawlesse passion";

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. F2v.

¹⁰⁶ *The Shepheards Holy-Day*, sig. G1.

¹⁰⁷ *Arviragus and Philicia*, Pt. I, sig. B1.

¹⁰⁸ *The Jealous Lovers*, p. 74.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

yet this innocent woman is wholly convinced that they may freely "entwine."¹¹⁰ In *The Platonic Lovers* such individualism reaches a point of absurdity. Ariola, whose hope of marriage in the first part of the play had denied her the joys of outward affection, now decides to think in a "cleaner sense" and to love according to Platonic doctrine. As a result, she may now take "All liberty" and make her greetings "More amorous and bold, though virtuous still."¹¹¹ In the same play, Theander, an avowed follower of the coterie code, chides Eurithea when she stays "too remote" and hence commands her to "Sit nearer!" so that they may realize more fully their spiritual love.¹¹² Once, he pursues Eurithea to her own boudoir, where, after she unveils on her couch, he presses his suit with a physical vigor that seems quite remote from true love of souls:

Thou art not Eurithea, but my rose,
My sober bashful flower, and I
Thy wanton woodbine that must grow about
Thee in embracements thus, until thou art
Entangled with chaste courtesies of love.¹¹³

Now, since the Platonics considered such physical liberties both chaste and divine, it is no wonder that the doctrine of the coterie became so popular in the period preceding the Wars. For here, conveniently wrapped in a mantle of virtue, was a freedom of individual desire that equaled, in its potentialities, the dreams of the most licentious courtier.

Such thinking went so far that several Platonics encircled open adultery and incest with a halo of spiritual love. Thus in *The Platonic Lovers*, Fredeline, who asserts that "pure platonic love" motivates his actions and

¹¹⁰ *The Ladies Priviledge*, sig. B3v.

¹¹¹ D'Avenant, *op. cit.*, II, 77.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, II, 58.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, II, 34.

thoughts, confides to Buonatesta that he wants his mistress married to another so that he may enjoy her not "by the tame and formal title of/A wife" but by the relationship of adulterous love. In fact, he wants her to marry so that "she may taste man" and thus unfreeze her "virginity"; then

when she comes to relish man, whose warm
Contactation makes her thaw, then like a spring,
Too long imprison'd in her ice, she'll spread
Into a lib'ral stream, that every thirsty
Lover may carouse, until his heat be quench'd.¹¹⁴

Without doubt D'Avenant is here satirizing the logical absurdities of Platonic love; but it is of importance that he puts his finger on the unbridled individualism which permeated coterie thought. In Sir John Suckling's *Aglaure*, Orbella takes the supreme logical step; for in this play, where so much talk turns upon the contentions of Platonics and anti-Platonics, she seriously argues that incest is pure. First, she mulls over in her mind the faint feeling of remorse; but she soon finds a logical argument to allay ethical qualms:

What is it thus within whispering remorse,
and calls Love Tyrant? all powers, but his,
their rigour, and our feare, have made divine!
But everie Creature holds of him by sense,
the sweetest Tenure; yea! but my husbands brother:
and what of that? doe harmlesse birds or beasts
aske leave of curious Heraldrie at all?
Does not the wombe of one faire spring,
bring unto the earth many sweet rivers,
that wantonly doe one another chace,
and in one bed, kisse, mingle, and embrace?¹¹⁵

Soon after Orbella's soliloquy, Ariaspes, her husband's brother, appears; and after kissing her he unhesitatingly states that because of her "beautie" her "divinitie" is "too

¹¹⁴ D'Avenant. *op. cit.*, II, 66.

¹¹⁵ *Aglaure*, p. 13.

great to be prophan'd." ¹¹⁶ Then, toward the end of the play, when Orbella views Ariaspes' dead body, she speaks of a sorrow so purified by love that her tears will make violets and primroses grow on his grave. ¹¹⁷ She was beautiful and divine, and their love was therefore pure; hence their incestuous thoughts were washed free from stain.

Here, then, is the code of Platonic love in the court of Henrietta Maria and the ethical casuistry which sprang from it. Despite the "Platonic" twist the Queen gave it, many of its doctrines present nothing particularly new; both its rituals and its themes stem from Andreas Capellanus and from the rich heritage of Renaissance poetry and prose. Its emphasis upon individualism, however, is significant. Its insistence on personal rights exercised at the expense of society not only allows it to fall into the general scheme of seventeenth-century revolt but also invited, in a time of public contention, specific attacks from the upholders of conventional law. The code may be thus associated with that brand of extreme individualism which then fomented debates and which now modern man likes to claim. The man of today, to be sure, would laugh heartily at Platonic reasoning; but, on grounds scarcely more solid in the sophisticated 1920's, Judge Ben Lindsey in extolling "companionate marriage" argued for complete individualism in matters of marriage and love and in so doing was hailed as an exponent of an America at last freed from Puritan bondage.

IV

In modern America, wits laughed companionate marriage out of court and latter-day Puritans arose in their wrath and smote down Judge Ben Lindsey. In John Ford's age, in almost the same way, sermons, pamphlets, and broadsides called Platonic lovers to task for their unconventional manners and morals. Chance commentary

¹¹⁶ *Aglaure*, p. 14.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

described the flagrant immorality of the cult, satire burlesqued its manners and ethics, and Puritan divines violently attacked both its rites and its tenets on grounds of Bible religion. This by no means implies that questions of marriage and love had never before come up for debate; on the contrary, preceding years are replete with pamphlets concerning domestic relations and the status of women.¹¹⁸ But between 1628 and the close of the theaters the Queen's cult focused attention upon particular questions which before had merited only general discussion, and as a consequence special issues of marriage and love paraded for public review.

This review brought into sharp conflict the Cavalier and Puritan parties; for the gospel of individualism, which the coterie not only articulated with unabashed repetition but also seemed to have followed in actual life, struck directly at the Puritan's fundamental philosophy of love and marital life. Puritans believed in the sanctity of marriage; they considered it an institution created by God for the consolation of the spirit of man and for the relief of his flesh. They described it as a union of one man and one woman, the male responsible and the female submissive; and they particularly stressed that this union, blessed by God, should result in the propagation of children.¹¹⁹ Consequently, when the Queen's coterie began to worship beauty in woman, to debase the marital estate, and to defend adultery and incest, many Puritans wrathfully struck down coterie members as well as its rites and beliefs. Other issues, to be sure, entered into the Roundhead castigation of the court; Catholicism, innovations, and hosts

¹¹⁸ See Louis B. Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England*, chap. vii, "Instruction in Domestic Relations," and chap. xiii, "The Popular Controversy over Woman."

¹¹⁹ See William and Malleville Haller, *op. cit.* "This dedication of the Puritan clerical caste to conjugal life," say the authors, "was hardly less important in its effects than that of courtly poets to the worship of feminine beauty."

of political problems played a great part in the anger which Puritans visited upon the unhappy Queen and her group. Nevertheless the coterie so crystallized "sin in court" and Puritans so clearly attacked its rituals and its basic beliefs that it may be considered as contributing to the final clash which ended in war.¹²⁰ But the present analysis intends in no way to reconstruct the whole background of Cavalier-Puritan conflict; it will address itself solely to comment and contention which sprang from Platonic love in the court.

The conflict of individualism and traditional marriage will emerge most clearly if casual comment and satire first point up some of the main issues. This procedure not only will sharpen the clash but also will indicate how popular the cult seems to have been. For, quite apart from attacks by the religious, commentary abounds with both allusions and satirical wit concerning the manners and basic ideas of this cult. The whole ritual of worship which courtiers solemnized to win the love of their ladies, for example, received a good deal of attention. This rite, which commonly went under the name of "court compliment," was seen to lead to love far from pure or divine. Thus in *Cupids Schoole*, a sort of handbook of love, the author reveals the utility of knowing the language of compliment and hence argues that a man must learn it in order to achieve his desires. Without such knowledge, he may pine away unregarded; with it, he holds the keys to virginity, for "such is the power of Complements, that it breakes lockes, open doores at mid-night, and will giue you accesse to the Mistris of your heart. . . . To conclude therefore, A Complement is the language of Gallants, the Conquerour of Maiden-heads."¹²¹ Even authors

¹²⁰ See G. F. Sensabaugh, "Platonic Love and the Puritan Rebellion," *Studies in Philology*, XXXVII (1940), 457-81.

¹²¹ *Cupids Schoole: Wherein, Yongmen and Maids may learne diuers sorts of new, witty, and Amorous Complements* (London, 1632), sigs. A2v-A3.

of Platonic plays sometimes paused long enough to look objectively at the techniques of love they promoted. In *A Fine Companion*, for instance, Shakerley Marmyon allows Valeria to see through the mist of idealism to the reality of courtly devices employed by the cult; and, with her vision thus cleared, she promptly condemns Spruse for his extravagant words of courtship and love:

I am very sorry,
The times disease has so prevail'd upon you.
Tis the perfection now of complement,
The onely end to corrupt honesty.
To prostitute your oathes, and winne our hearts
To your beliefe, is the Court eloquence.¹²²

In *The English Gentlewoman*, Richard Brathwaite, though not a cleric himself, holds up the danger of this disease of the times by referring to the all-seeing eye of God. He prefaces his remarks by stating that whorish women, however secret in their affairs of the heart, sin in the sight of God; then he admonishes lovers to give up their complimentary devices and to embrace that which is in reality virtuous and true:

Sinnes may bee without danger for a time, but neuer without feare. Stand then as in the presence of God; redeeme the time you haue lost; loue that which you haue hitherto loath'd; loath that which you haue hitherto lou'd. Know that these *Superficiall Complementors*, are hypocriticall Courtiers; these formall *Damazens*, profest Curtezans. You must not hold *Religion* to bee meere *Complement*.¹²³

It thus seems evident that those outside coterie circles saw extravagant rhetoric leading to paths far from innocent or pure, regardless of how holy the ritual appeared

¹²² *A Fine Companion*, sig. C3v.

¹²³ *The English Gentlewoman, drawne out to the full Body* (London, 1631), p. 116.

to cult devotees. But this is not all. Satirists looked at the cult and laughed as only London wits of the late Renaissance could. Richard Crimsal, for example, in a series of short speeches and songs, burlesqued the ridiculous verbiage of coterie love and pointed out the deceitfulness of such hypocritical worship;¹²⁴ and, in *Lady Alimony*, a caustic play satirizing the whole conception of Platonic love in the court, Tillyvally, one of the Platonic characters, specifically refers to the foolish devices of his friends but seems unaware that he employs the same ritual himself:

Like brave Platonick you profess much love,
Which you ennamle with gilt promises,
But my affection's conscious of no guilt
Nor a rhetorick tincture.¹²⁵

In this way the author of *Lady Alimony* reveals how innocent coterie lovers seemed to be of their own silly posturing, and at the same time laughs at the wordy rites of the cult.

Talk of the town quickly responded to other manifestations of the Queen's group in court. Professional playwrights, though no doubt in the main sympathetic to the Royalist party, nevertheless could hardly refrain from making passing remarks upon the coterie's notions of marriage and love. In Massinger's *The Guardian*, Adorio, a professed libertine, complains that Calista, whom he is trying to seduce, speaks too soon of marriage, and lets it be known that no such yoke will act as a curb to his freedom. In his attempt to strengthen his case he refers to the court where such love is not only accepted but where marriage takes on the appearance of a breach in decorum:

¹²⁴ *Cupid's Soliciter of Love. With Sundry Complements. Wherein is shown the deceitfulness of Loving & Lovers, now a days commonly used* [1640?]. See also *A peerelesse Paragon* (London, [1633?]).

¹²⁵ *Lady Alimony* (London, 1659), sig. C1v.

In my tongue my heart
Speaks freely, fair one. Think on't, a close friend,
Or private mistress, is court rhetoric;
A wife, mere rustic solecism.¹²⁶

In much more detail but in the same vein, Richard Brome, in *The Northern Lasse*, exposes court values concerning marital vows through a dialogue between Howdee and Squelch, two men who seem to deplore the current state of affairs. In language whose innuendo cannot be misunderstood, Squelch begins by complaining that to be "within a Mistriss, is to be a servant in the most Courtlie phrase," and Howdee answers:

I sir. Those are convenient servants sir. We are covenant servants. They are respected above Husbands: We abased beneath Slaves. They purchase place, honours, and offices, oftentimes with their Ladies monies, when we find not our wages without hard words, and are in fear (poor snakes) to have our sloughs pulled over our ears before the year go about. We drudge for our Ladies, they play with their Ladies: But the best is, we labour and sweat it out for our Ladies, when they are fain to take physick, and lie in for their Ladies.¹²⁷

But again *Lady Alimony* best reveals what was going on in the coterie from the point of view of an outsider; the whole play, in fact, is a commentary upon court values concerning marriage and true love. The play begins with Trillo's comment, "Here is work for *Platonicks*"; and as the action develops it becomes increasingly clear that the plot holds up for satiric review the whole notion of Platonic love in the court. The husbands in the play lack virility, as evidenced in the names of two of them, Sir Amadin Puny and Sir Tristram Shorttool; and as a consequence their wives seek Platonic lovers who will satisfy

¹²⁶ *Philip Massinger*, ed. Arthur Symons (London, 1889), II, 192.

¹²⁷ *The Dramatic Works of Richard Brome* (London, 1873), III, 69.

their desires. Easily finding such generous lovers, they revel in their happy discovery:

Ushers come and Aple-Squires
 To compleat our free desires:
 Platonicks there be store
 Fitly fram'd and train'd to man it.
 Bavin once set a fire
 Will not so soon expire;
 Let's never stay with such as they,
 Who gladly would but cannot.¹²⁸

Prior to this, they had, in the presence of their Platonic "soul" lovers, called their husbands "poor Cuckolds" and then openly repudiated their marital vows; furthermore, to their former mates' plaintive "we were sometimes your Husbands," they callously answer:

True,
 You were so; but your known defects have raz'd
 That style of Wedlock: and infranchis'd us
 From that tyrannick yoke.—We'r now our own,
 Nor shall our Beds by you be henceforth known.¹²⁹

Thus by way of satire the author of *Lady Alimony* strips from the coterie its mantle of purity and virtue and reveals its beliefs for exactly what they are—an excuse for licentious courtiers and lascivious ladies to follow their individual whims.

The coterie notion that true love of souls should allow any liberty of action and thought also received satirical notice. Even playwrights in court were not above dropping remarks now and then which indicate their awareness of this brand of sophistical thought. In *The Royall Slave*, for instance, Ariene recognizes the real intent of several passionate lovers who attempt to court her according to

¹²⁸ *Lady Alimony*, sig. H3v.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, sig. E4.

the rules of the cult, and without hesitation she describes to Cratander what they tried to do to her virtue:

What they stile Love-sport only, and misname
An arguing out of *Plato*, would have prov'd
A true and downe-right Rape, if that your presence
Had not become our Rescue.¹³⁰

Strictly speaking, in view of coterie values, no rape could ever have occurred; here Ariene seems to judge by convention rather than by the code of the cult. In Jasper Mayne's *The Citye Match*, Warehouse discloses the casuistry of court love with even more point. He has luckily caught Bright and Newcut, two Platonic lovers who had come disguised as pictures to make chaste love to his wife; and, though at first puzzled by their performance, he soon sees that underneath the appearance of virtue is the simple fact of adultery:

Now J conceive what is *Platonick* Love,
Tis to have men like *Pictures* brought disguised,
To Cuckold us with vertue.¹³¹

The author of *Lady Alimony* also saw adultery beneath the Platonic mantle of goodness, with the result that, characteristically, he held up for ridicule in the course of the play the coterie belief that no Platonic lover could sin. Once, for instance, just after the Platonics have embraced and played with their ladies, Sir Amadine Puny asks:

Is this th'*Platonick* Law; all things in common?¹³²

and subsequently these "communative" lovers so openly enjoy the lusts of the flesh that the whole system of Platonic love lies stripped of its trappings of virtue. If courtiers and ladies-in-waiting thought they could enter the doors of adultery and emerge with purified souls,

¹³⁰ *The Royall Slave*, sig. D2.

¹³¹ *The Citye Match* (Oxford, 1639), p. 60.

¹³² *Lady Alimony*, sig. E3v.

they misjudged the keen eyes and sharp minds of London wits of the day.

Such satire, coupled with the foregoing remarks from the inner circle itself, gives particular significance to many contemporary allusions to sexual looseness in court. Thus Nathanael Richards' portrait of "The Vicious Courtier," who spends his "Time in Commendations,/In Sighes, Tales obscene, Visitations,/Set Faces, and set speeches, pickt from Playes,"¹³³ takes on a specialized meaning in view of coterie rites and beliefs; and Robert Chamberlaine's tales of sin in high places appear more pointed and cogent. One such story relates how a lord inquired of a citizen why so many cuckolds ran through the streets of the town, to which query the citizen replied that people in town merely ape popular fashions in court.¹³⁴ Chaste epithalamiums lament that "loose Madames of the Court,/ Make immodesty a sport";¹³⁵ even plays of bold bawdry, such as *The Costlie Whore*, allude to questionable practices evident in the Queen's cult of love. Alberto, for instance, after a Platonic dialogue which questioned whether Valentia could be impure despite her incomparable beauty, states that

We shall haue lust a vertue in the Court:
The wayes of sinne be furthered by reward:
Panders and Parasites sit in the places
Of the wise Counsellors and hurry all.¹³⁶

Now if men of liberal tastes found the court a place of moral laxness and of casuistic contention for sin, it is little wonder that Puritans made sin in high places one of their main battle cries. But they not only raised a loud cry; they spoke so specifically against coterie manners and morals that seventeenth-century citizens must perforce

¹³³ *The Celestiall Publican* (London, 1630), sig. G3v.

¹³⁴ *A New Booke of Mistakes* (London, 1637), pp. 74-75.

¹³⁵ ΓΑΜΗΛΙΑ *On the happy marriage of the most accomplished paire*, H. R. Esq. And the vertuous A. B. (Oxford, 1640), p. 25.

¹³⁶ *The Costlie Whore* (London, 1633), sig. Ev.

have recognized the debate between Roundheads and court on vital questions of marriage and love.

Puritans¹⁸⁷ first roundly attacked the rites of the cult. As early as 1628, Henry Burton and Prynne observed that Whitehall was filled with parasitic ladies and fops wasting time in frivolous compliment;¹⁸⁸ and the years immediately following saw the air filled with assaults against this hypocritical practice which ranked so high in the Puritan hierarchy of sin. Samuel Keme, for example, saw in courtship an evidence of unmanly action. Thus in a military sermon he bids the men standing before him to follow their captains' commands but to avoid "Courtship and complement," since such actions "sute not well with souldiers."¹⁸⁹ John Rogers, minister of God's word in Dedham, in a long treatise concerning human relations, points his finger directly at false posturing in court and calls it a hypocritical display in comparison with genuine love:

There be that pretend they loue, but alas! try, and you shall finde no such thing. A deale of Court-holy-water, congeyes, and crouchings, an handfull of true hearty loue, is worth ten arme-fuls of their congeyes downe to the ancles.¹⁴⁰

In *A Treatise Against Lying*, John Downname flays courtiers for their sinful devices. He begins by describing the elegant speech they employ; then he discloses that under the cover of these soft-sounding words, they snare those for whom they apparently profess the most love. In so doing they break the commands of God:

¹⁸⁷ The term "Puritan" is here used in the broad sense. Some evidence, for example, comes from Anglicans who in point of view were Puritan.

¹⁸⁸ Burton, *A Tryall Of Private Devotions*, sigs. B2v-B3; and Prynne, *A Brieve Survey And Censure Of Mr. Cozens His Couzening Deuotions*, pp. 43-44.

¹⁸⁹ *The New Fort of True Honour, Made Impregnable* (London, 1640), p. 22.

¹⁴⁰ *A Treatise of Love* (London, 1629), p. 96.

Amongst some Courtiers, they are esteem'd ornaments and elegancies of speech, and commended as witty complements to fill up the empty place of absent Truth: neither do they use their tongues for that end, for which God gave them, namely to bee the true interpreters of their mind's and hearts, but to faine and dissemble, professing the greatest love and kindnesse to those unto whom they intend most mischief.¹⁴¹

But perhaps John Featly, in a long sermon on the honor of chastity, treats court compliment with the greatest detail. Using the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife to point up his moral, he paints a vivid picture of Egyptian court follies, all of which Joseph cheerfully avoided because his early training warned him against sins of the flesh. Because of this moral training, Featly continues, Joseph saw through the devices of Potiphar's wife; in fact, the very "sweetnesse of her lovely complements, discover's the ugliness of her foule intents."¹⁴² At this juncture Featly pauses to ask his congregation a rhetorical question before he further pursues the problem of compliment. Could it be that a "mortall sinne may not couch it selfe under our common greetings?" Sidestepping a direct answer, Featly nevertheless condemns compliment aimed at impure delights, which both court and town knew to be the kind prevalent in the Queen's cult of love:

Those kinde of complements (of themselves) suffer not the name of sinnes: But if their aime bee luxurious, their end is pernicious. If then our very salutations, and common greetings (standing, onely, in impure vessels) may gather dregs, and so be turned into corruption: What are those more impious acts which, swelling in our hearts, breake forth into wickednesse?¹⁴³

If John Featly, in spite of his detailed analysis, drew back and failed to deliver a direct blow against the coterie's

¹⁴¹ *A Treatise Against Lying* (London, 1636), p. 4.

¹⁴² *The Honor of Chastity. A Sermon, made and preached* (London, 1632), p. 8.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

ritual of love, Thomas Lawrence, in a sermon defending clerical rights, felt no such compunctions. Unequivocally, he alienates courtly lovers from the friendship of God; moreover, he unhesitatingly brings down the hatred of God upon hypocrites whose smooth words belie their intentions:

God is no friend to the hypocrisy of complement, and therefore in Scripture ever meanes more then he speaks: *the words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried seaven times in the fire*, saith the Psalmist, calcined and sublimated from this drosse: for he is a God of truths, not of varnishes; of realities not of shadows. He hates that mouth which belies the minde, and likes men on earth best, when they resemble, the Saints in Heaven; where soules commerce *per verbum mentis*, without tongues; and thoughts are seene without the mediation of words.¹⁴⁴

In this way the clergy answered Cratander's worship for his saintlike Atossa, or Spruse's courtship for his angel, Valeria; and through sermons and pamphlets they continued the attack by unmasking the sophistical tenet that beauty and goodness are one and the same.

The clergy took especial pains to show that no relation exists between beauty of body and virtue of soul; in fact, they reiterated that, contrary to coterie belief, beauty leads more often to sin than to purity of action or thought. Thus, in a lengthy sermon on common sins of the day, William Andrewes contends that beauty is but a vain shadow which the true Israelite should gladly pass by;¹⁴⁵ and in *Mundanium Speculum*, a treatise which pictures every defection the Stuart citizen could think of, Edmund Cobbes flatly declares that "beautie hath made many adulterers, but neuer any chaste."¹⁴⁶ William Crompton

¹⁴⁴ *Two Sermons* (Oxford, 1635). Sermon upon "The Priviledge of the Clergy," p. 4.

¹⁴⁵ *The True Israelite, or, The sincere Christian distinguished from the Hypocrite* (London, 1638), pp. 118-19.

¹⁴⁶ *Mundanium Speculum, or, The Worldlings Looking Glasse* (London, 1630), pp. 221-22.

goes into the question more fully; claiming that a man should look for qualities of fidelity, industry, vigilance, charity, governance, wisdom, and piety in the woman of his choice, he points out that beauty is of no consequence, since "Men may easily find faire women wantons."¹⁴⁷ In a similar sermon on marriage, Bartholomew Parsons pursues the issue of beauty to its logical conclusion. He opens up his assault by reminding his audience that "*A faire forme is nothing but a iemme of glasse, a fading bubble, snow, a rose a dew, a winde, smoake, aire, nothing.*" After this warning he strikes at the very core of coterie thought by the argument that beauty is not only ephemeral but also corrupt:

*. . . when thou seest a faire woman, that hath a twinkling eye, & a smiling face, a looke pleasant, attractive and amiable, such as putteth thy heart into an heat and setteth on fire thy desire; thinke that that which so ravisheth thee, is nought else but earth, and that the fire which burneth thee is but dung, and then will thy fury bee asswaged. Raise vp the skinne of her face, and thou shalt see all the vilenesse of that goodly shew. Stay not upon the outward maske, but pierce with the eye of thought into that which is within, and what else shalt thou see there but bones sinewes and veines? But this is not enough, Remember that beauty changeth, groweth old, and withereth, that the quicknesse of the eye waxeth dead, that the cheekes grow hollow, that all that faire flower passeth away. See what is that maketh thee (as it were) a beast. It is ashes, dust and filth, that burneth thee. For what is the substance of this beauty that thou seest but snot, spittle, corrupt blood, and the iuice of rotten nourishment?*¹⁴⁸

In *The Lover: Or, Nuptiall Love*, Robert Crofts connects this whole attack upon worship of beauty in woman with devotees of the Queen's cult of love. Warning par-

¹⁴⁷ *A Wedding-Ring, Fitted to the Finger of Every Paire that Have or Shall Meete in the Feare of God* (London, 1632), p. 17.

¹⁴⁸ *Boaz and Ruth Blessed: or A Sacred Contract Honourred with a solemne Benediction* (Oxford, 1633), pp. 33-34.

ticularly those who deprive themselves of reason by comparing the eyes of their beloved to the "Starres" and by picturing them as angels and divine creatures, he then addresses courtiers directly and accuses them of employing evil devices. Furthermore, he sees clearly that their actions point not to virtue but to lust, and for that reason he would let them consider the day of judgment in view of their wicked actions and thoughts:

You Courtiers and others, who thinke it a trimme peece of glory to get a Mistresse, and a Ladyes favour forsooth, you who esteeme and call your Minnions, Goddesses and divine creatures; And would like *Adam* give Paradise if you had it for an Apple, and venture heaven to satisfie your base and vnlawfull Lusts, you that adore these Victimes, and think your selves most happy when you can tempt the Pudicity of these female creatures and overcome them to your Lusts, what doe you but act the Devils Stratagems which he teaches you, what doe you enjoy and adore but a Crust of Playster full of corruption, a peece of flesh that must Rot and turne to Putrifaction.

What a thing is this; A peece of Clay quickened with life adores a Snowy dunghill. There shall come a time when the Crust of your pleasures shall bee broken, and you shall see what misery lyes within; thinke what faces you shall make at the day of Iudgement, unlesse you repent and amend.¹⁴⁹

It thus appears very plain that Puritans, or men with similar values, proclaimed in loud tones that the association of beauty and virtue is false; moreover, with no hesitation they pronounced that such a belief led more often to sin than to true love of souls. For this reason they raised a sharp cry against the tenet itself; and, because the association of beauty and virtue crowned lust with a garland of roses, they flayed those who through coterie casuistry excused their conventional crime.

This casuistry of condoning what ordinarily passes for lust Puritans called a "trick of the flesh." At least, divines

¹⁴⁹ *The Lover: Or, Nuptiall Love* (London, 1638), sigs. D4v-D5.

spoke again and again of this trick by which men of the day indulged in sin and then proceeded to argue its existence away. Whether such allusions refer directly to the Queen and her group can never be known; but, in view of the popularity of the coterie, it seems likely that such clear accusations point to the court, particularly to cult devotees. Henry Jeanes, for example, laments that the casuistry of the day claims that sin is not intrinsically evil;¹⁵⁰ and Thomas Carter, in explaining the duty of husbands, bewails that

neuer was this sin of whoredome & adultery at such a haight as at this day it is amongst, vs amongst young men it is now counted but a tricke of youth, & among others of more yeares which should haue more grace, it is called the sweet pleasing sin of Letchery.¹⁵¹

Edmund Cobbes, in a typical Puritan sermon against the world, the flesh, and the devil, brings down the judgment of God upon those who attempt to make lust appear but a trick:

And though the wanton minions of this age extenuate it, and say, it is but a tricke of youth; yet let them know, that it is a sinne hatefull in the sight of God, who will not let them goe unpunished; for, *whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*.¹⁵²

Edmund Cobbes rested content to let God judge whoremongers and adulterers, but Humphrey Sydenham thought that such should be exposed here and now. In the very year the coterie swayed most in the court, Sydenham preached a powerful sermon on the conflict between spirit and flesh in which he made several references so pointed that keen minds must have recognized where he directed his shafts. He spoke of those whose conversa-

¹⁵⁰ *A Treatise Concerning A Christians Carefull Abstinence from all Appearance of Evill* (Oxford, 1640), p. 3.

¹⁵¹ *Carters Christian Common Wealth; Or, Domesticall Dutyes deciphered* (London, 1627), sigs. D-[D2v].

¹⁵² *The Parable of the Vncleane Spirit* (London, 1633), p. 17.

tions are wicked, libertines whose words make white their most scarlet sins; and he further made clear that even the greatest of crimes they count but a trick of the flesh:

And this peculiar Plea of Gods chosen Servants is at length become an Apologie for the customary sinnes of those who in their conversations are most wicked and deprav'd; . . . the loosest *Libertines* that are; . . . those *plagues* and *furies* of the times, lay title to it, and 'tis made not onely the excuse of their sinnes, but their very *patent* and *priviledge* of sinning, who under the colour of their *carnall frailties* can blanch and palliate their *deepest enormities*; make Scarlet, Snow; and Crimson, Wooll; . . . *Lyes* and *Oathes*, and *Blasphemies* and *Prophanations* are at length but a businesse of the Flesh, to wallow in Surfets and Vomitings and Excesse of Riots, . . . *Chambering* and *wantonnesse*, and a *lustfull neighing* after thy neighbours wife, nay, the ranke sweat of an Incestuous Bed, a tricke of the flesh also¹⁵³

It must be conceded that Puritans and men like them have always castigated sins of the day; it may therefore be true that the foregoing allusions are no more than conventional protests. Yet, because of the definite conflict over questions of marriage and love, they take on a special importance; moreover, they seem fashioned to fit the casuistry of coterie love rather than the general sins of the day; and they without doubt helped topple the Queen and her party.

The questions of marriage which the coterie brought out in the open also drew from Puritans many heated remarks. Since they believed it the duty of the wife to submit and obey, they violently opposed, as prior analysis has shown, the worship of beauty in woman; and, since they considered marriage a bond of holy communion, they attacked those who contended that marital ties were of little importance. Milton alone among Puritans pressed

¹⁵³ *Sermons Vpon Solemne Occasions: Preached In Severall Auditories* (London, 1637). Sermon upon "The Christian Duell," pp. 97-98.

the gospel of individualism to the logical extreme of personal rights; in the main, Puritans demanded complete allegiance to marital vows once they were sworn. In addition to this, and still more contrary to beliefs of the cult, they stressed the evil of exalting woman above man, proclaimed that God sanctified marriage, and insisted that to break sacred marital vows was to sin against Jehovah himself.¹⁵⁴ Consequently, in order to meet coterie arguments, Puritans not only reiterated their own point of view in sermons and pamphlets but also revealed that some quarters had attempted to belittle the matrimonial state. To be sure, they often left those quarters unnamed, for direct allusions may have cost them their freedom and their ears; but what they said points directly at the philosophy of marriage and love then prevailing in court. In the same sermon in which he flayed the worship of beauty in woman, for example, Bartholomew Parsons bemoans that marriage nowadays, rather than being considered holy and pure, is held up in disdain by obscene songs and filthy devices;¹⁵⁵ and for this reason, as well as for others, he feels that the tongue of the righteous should speak out in defense of conventional rights:

Hence then may the tongue of the learned speake a word in season, for the stopping of those foule mouths that shoote out their arrowes even bitter words, either against the state of matrimony to disgrace it as miserable, or against the ordinance it selfe to condemne it as sinfull and abominable.¹⁵⁶

Others of similar mind helped swell the cry against those who would attempt to make marriage lose caste, with the

¹⁵⁴ See, for example, Richard Cooke, *A White Sheete, Or A Warning for Whoremongers* (London, 1629), and Joseph Benthams, *The Christian Conflict* (London, 1635), for these particular points of view. See also William and Malleville Haller, "The Puritan Art of Love," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, V (1942), 235-72.

¹⁵⁵ *Boaz and Ruth Blessed: or A Sacred Contract Honoured with a solemne Benediction*, pp. 6-7.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

result that soon a number of Puritans began to associate growing popery in court with looseness in personal conduct and love. That such a twist should occur, however, is not hard to explain. The Queen herself openly professed her Catholic religion; moreover, soon after her arrival in England she set up a chapel and began to attract adherents, one of whom was Walter Montague, the author of *The Shepherd's Paradise*. This play most completely expresses the tenets and ethics of Platonic love; it is further distinguished in that Henrietta Maria herself played one of the parts, which no doubt made her peculiarly sensitive to Prynne's allusions to notorious whores in his *Histriomastix*. In addition to this, it soon became the fashion in court to profess the Catholic religion¹⁵⁷ as well as Platonic love; and as a consequence Puritans probably considered coterie notions of marriage to be the same as those of Rome. Whatever the sequence, through the decade before the theaters closed, Puritans demanded in many special sermons on marriage that Catholics be flailed because of their beliefs concerning the marital state; and the debate, as is wont in times of contention, involved issues only remotely related to the discussion but politically important to the party grasping for power.

The Puritan's main point was that popery tried to make wedlock appear unclean, even as the coterie code had attempted to do. In fact, in *A Tryall Of Private Devotions*, which had also attacked idle compliment among courtiers and ladies-in-waiting, Henry Burton accused Cosin of creating a Catholic ritual in court that declared marriage a mere avocation, a sort of ceremony unfit to be solemnized in times of fasting and prayer:

Alas poore Marriage, art thou now become so vncleane, vnholly, as to be shut out from holy times? Thou wast wont to be *Hon-*

¹⁵⁷ Elizabeth Godfrey, *Social Life under the Stuarts* (London, 1904), p. 189.

ourable among all, and the bed vndeified; But Marriage (it seemeth) is an vnnecessarie auocation, as our Authour termes it.¹⁵⁸

Richard Clerke makes accusations even more to the point. In the second part of a double sermon on marital life he pictures the difference between the high Puritan conception of marriage and the low esteem in which Catholics held that institution. So clear is this contrast that for him the least taint of Catholicism in matters of marriage and love is tantamount to heinous sin and corruption:

As for the Papists, how holy doe they hold it, it is apparent by the Priests; whom therefore they permit not for to marrie; because their service is about the holy things. Pope *Syricius* termeth it fleshly pollution. *Hildebrand* perferred whores before wives; fornication, adultery, yea incest it selfe before Matrimonie. Yea some are so shamelesse of that sort, that they will allow the Priest rather *centum prostibula*, an hundred harlots, than one lawfull wife. And as they hold all marriage impure, so second and third marriage they professe plainly to be *fornicatio*, & *prostitutio*, i. whoredome and brothelrie.¹⁵⁹

Richard Sibbes brings to a fitting conclusion the general Puritan opinion on Catholic notions of wedlock. In explaining the spiritual man's aim, he describes first the holy union of marriage by which God has blessed men and women. Then he maintains that all men should be free to enter that "honourable" condition in that through it the church is upheld and heaven is thereby increased. Hence he concludes that the devil himself must have released the idea that marriage is a low and an abominable state:

It was the divell that brought in a base esteeme of that honourable Condition. In Poperie, they will rather bee the member of

¹⁵⁸ *A Tryall Of Private Devotions*, sig. F.

¹⁵⁹ *Sermons Preached By That Reverend And Learned Divine Richard Clerke, Dr. in Divinitie* (London, 1637), p. 521.

an Harlot, than the head of a wife. It was the Divell that brought in those abominable opinions and writings to disparage that Honourable Condition, and so it must bee thought.¹⁶⁰

Such accusations have little significance outside the frame of the immediate conflict. Viewed, however, in relation to professed popery in court and in connection with the similarity of coterie ideals to what the Puritan thought to be popish conceptions of wedlock, these attacks make it clear that Roundheads and the Queen's group stood poles apart on questions of marriage and love. What this divergence contributed to the Cavalier-Puritan conflict is of no concern here; but plainly the issues debated so sharply were those raised by the practice of Platonic love.

In this climate of conflict John Ford wrote his significant drama. In the welter of town joke and Puritan sermon, of satirical play and solemn treatise on love, Stuart citizens interested in the exchange of opinion must have seen two main ideals fighting for supremacy: Puritans stood behind the bulwark of convention and maintained the holy and high state of marriage; the court fostered complete individualism and considered marital vows of less importance than personal whim. And, though not a member of the court, John Ford took a stand in this conflict by upholding in his plays the very rites and ideals which Henrietta Maria nurtured in her coterie of Platonic love.

V

Why John Ford should turn for his ideals of marriage and love not to Puritan pulpits but to the court of Henrietta Maria can be readily seen. His first poem, *Fame's Memorial*, had its origin in the adulterous love of Lord Mountjoy and Lady Rich; and *Honour Triumphant; or the Peers' Challenge* grew from the King of Denmark's

¹⁶⁰ *The Spirituall-Mans Aime* (London, 1637), pp. 27-28.

visit to James of England in 1606. Later evidence shows that Ford's early interest in court life did not wane. In *Love's Sacrifice* he commends "feminine antiks," an allusion possibly to Henrietta Maria and her ladies acting in court masks; in praising Brome's *The Northern Lasse* he speaks of new fashions in plays at court:

*Witness this Northern Piece. The Court affords
No newer fashion, or for wit, or words.*¹⁶¹

He also seemed to have been a friend of court poets. Crashaw, a devoted follower of Henrietta Maria, wrote a couplet on *Love's Sacrifice* and *The Broken Heart*; and Shirley, who followed the Queen to France during the Civil Wars, connects Ford with the group of dramatic writers whose plays were irritating the rabid Puritan, Prynne:

*Looke here THOV that hast malice to the Stage,
And Impudence enough for the whole Age;
Voluminously-Ignorant! be vext
To read this Tragedy, and thy owne be next.*¹⁶²

Such links with the court, slight as they are, suggest that because of position and choice Ford would see eye to eye with royal beliefs and contentions.¹⁶³

Even a brief glance at Ford's plays reveals their like-

¹⁶¹ *The Dramatic Works of Richard Brome* (London, 1873), III, xi. It is questionable whether the "J. F." who wrote this commendatory verse is the playwright.

¹⁶² See Shirley's verse to his "friend Mr. JOHN FORD" prefacing *Love's Sacrifice*. Commentary agrees that these lines allude to William Prynne, whose *Histriomastix* appeared shortly before *Love's Sacrifice*.

¹⁶³ A few scholars have hinted at John Ford's relation to the court of Charles I. Ford was a "child of a society tainted by the affectation of purity, and a court that had ceased to be national and robust," thinks Havelock Ellis (*John Ford*, xii); he was a "follower of the courtly, aristocratic, and romantic tradition" and shows "a taint . . . of the more than dubious 'Platonic' theorizing, then fashionable at court," observes Stuart Sherman (*Materialien zur Kunde des älteren Englischen Dramas*, XXIII, viii, xi). Both, however, make only passing comments.

ness to Platonic drama in court. From *The Lover's Melancholy*, an Arcadian play in which the characters wade deep in tears of thwarted passion, to *The Lady's Trial*, which shows the power of chaste love, they stress the importance of romantic affection and the ennobling power of beauty. *The Broken Heart* glorifies love for its own sake; the courtship of Biancha and Fernando in *Love's Sacrifice* is nothing more than a troubadour's song; 'Tis Pity She's a Whore makes a problem of incest; *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble* assembles a bower of ladies both virtuous and beautiful; and *The Queen* tells a story of beauty defended by strong champions of honor. Moreover, Ford's characters speak in courtly love-jargon,¹⁶⁴ pen and recite love letters and poems,¹⁶⁵ woo in extravagant conceits, and carry on debates and similitude contests;¹⁶⁶ they become involved in secret loves and disguises and despair over unsatisfied desire. Sometimes, along with Cartwright and Brome, Ford satirizes these hollow devices if his lovers are comic or lack true love of souls. In *The Lover's Melancholy*, for example, Grilla holds up for ridicule the whining tunes, sighs, and tears of Cuculus, a

¹⁶⁴ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 500, 503, 507, 1517, 1736; *The Broken Heart*, ll. 1606-11; *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 359-65, 369-74, 708-13, 1178 ff., 1340-85; 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, ll. 1193-97; *Perkin Warbeck*, ll. 354, 366, 385, 388-94, 397-402, 404-7; *The Queen*, ll. 282-88, 1383-88, 1436-46; *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 398, 401, 1199-1220; *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 1027-36, 1043-55. These are some of the more obvious illustrations of love-jargon. See also *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 621 ff., for a description of methods used in "feats of Courtship."

¹⁶⁵ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1179-98; *The Broken Heart*, ll. 523 ff.; *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 708-13; 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, ll. 877 ff.; *The Queen*, ll. 606 ff.; *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 404 ff.

In *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, Livio mentions that it is "possible" to name the "Rules" of courtship; but he leaves that particular job to Flavia, who speaks of "secret Courtship" carried on by "tokens," "letters," messages, and the proffering of "devotions" (ll. 1974-77).

¹⁶⁶ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1158-85; *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 1170 ff.; *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 1043-55.

fool planning to win the love of his mistress through extravagant conceits:

Euen as the snuffe of a candle that is burnt in the socket, goes out, and leaues a strong perfume behind it; or as a piece of toasted cheese next the heart in a morning is a restorative for a sweet breath: so, euen so the odoriferous sauour of your loue doth perfume my heart, (Hay ho) with the pure sent of an intolerable content, and not to be indur'd.¹⁶⁷

In *Love's Sacrifice*, Maurucio makes ridiculous the whole machinery of Platonic love by his effeminate toilet and dainty practice of worship of beauty, the latter of which reaches a climax of satire in a scene where he supposedly clutches his lady's hand while he recites a poem of true love:

Most excellent Marquesse, most faire La-dy,
Let not old age, or haire that are sil-uer
Dis-parage my desire; for it may-be
I am then other greene youth nimb-ler:
Since I am your gra-cies seruant so true,
Great Lady then loue me for my ver-tue.¹⁶⁸

But neither Ford nor coterie members laughed when they seriously examined their characters' hearts and found love straining them until they broke; in such situations they referred to the Platonic theology of love and argued the cause of individual rights. However much of this theology Ford may have inherited from his romantic predecessors or from the black, amoral vigor of decadent Italy,¹⁶⁹ it

¹⁶⁷ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 1179-85.

¹⁶⁸ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 708-13.

¹⁶⁹ See Stuart Sherman, *Ford's Debt to His Predecessors and Contemporaries, and His Contribution to the Decadence of the Drama*, p. 408 and *passim*. Here Sherman lists the ideas which he believed Ford to have inherited from Lyly, Spenser, and Sidney: (1) A theory of the celestial origin of love; (2) acknowledgment of the sovereign rights and the authority of love in the conduct of life; (3) a consequent fatalistic attitude toward passion; (4) a longing for an ideal and Arcadian state.

Tradition holds that Ford found his amorality concerning marriage

seems pretty certain that in espousing court manners and morals he was taking part in the current debate. A further analysis of his plays will back up this contention by showing how closely he adopted cult tenets and how seriously he approved its ethical casuistry.

Fate rules all lovers. With the exception of *Perkin Warbeck* and *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, all Ford's plays have much of their meaning based upon the inevitability of passion. This inevitability, as prior analysis has shown, arises chiefly from Ford's belief in scientific determinism. But Ford also refers often to "fate" and in so doing not only further illustrates his belief in necessity but also reveals his relationship to Henrietta Maria's Platonic cult. It may be that the determinism inherent in Burton's analysis of heroic love and the fate referred to by devotees of the cult have a common origin in medieval conceptions of passion. Speculation concerning such a relationship, however, has little significance in the present discussion. Of importance is the fact that Ford emphasizes the inevitability of man's course in the world both by basing his plots upon scientific necessity and by allowing his characters to reiterate how fate governs their lives.

Ford's heroes and heroines, like the principal characters in Platonic drama, make it clear that, since fate shapes man's destiny and absolves him from responsible action, no deed, whether of love or of lust, must be queried. "I dare not question/The will of heaven," says Castanna,

and love in Italian *novelle*. This tradition began, apparently, with Henry Weber's *The Dramatic Works of John Ford*, whose introduction (I, xlvii) claims that Ford found his plots in French, Spanish, and Italian novels. Since 1811 nearly every editor and commentator has mentioned Ford's debt to Italy; even Stuart Sherman, who questioned this traditional notion, agreed that Ford found his Platonic theology of love in Speroni's *Canace è Macareo* and his defense of its morals in the Paduan *Accademia degli Elevati* (see *'Tis Pity She's a Whore and The Broken Heart* [Boston, 1915], liii). It must be noted, however, that Emil Koeppel (*op. cit.*, p. 176) believed that "Ford's literarisches Lebenswerk ist fast ganz frei von italienischen Einflüssen"

after Spinella has observed "The courtship's somewhat quick" and has advised her not to "Reject the use of fate"; and Malfato answers: "Vnthought of and unlookt for."¹⁷⁰ Thamasta, after having changed her affection from Menaphon to Parthenophil, feels that fate has overruled her wisdom,¹⁷¹ later justifies her shift by declaring "in all actions,/Nature yeelds to Fate,"¹⁷² and argues that "in vaine we striue to crosse/ The destiny that guides vs."¹⁷³ Stressing the same idea Velasco struggles against his love for Salassa but finds it vain "To strive against the ordinance of fate";¹⁷⁴ love and fate, in fact, confirm and ratify a "holy league."¹⁷⁵ Fernando, to whom Biancha has been drawn by a "fatall minute,"¹⁷⁶ explains that neither D'Avolos, who is plotting against him, nor hell can "affront" the "passage" of his "fate,"¹⁷⁷ which leads him into mental adultery with Biancha; and the Duke, Biancha's husband, accepting apparent cuckoldry with "oh my fate,"¹⁷⁸ predicts that future generations will weep whole nights repeating the story of their unfortunate doom.¹⁷⁹ But more vigorously than in any of his plays, Ford shows the strength of fate in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*. Early in the action Giovanni swears that fate will be his god if he cannot free himself from the god of vengeance by prayer;¹⁸⁰ and getting, apparently, no relief from his supplication, he resigns himself to his incestuous love with Annabella, declaring that the "fates haue doom'd" his "death" because the more he strives the more he loves.¹⁸¹ Believing his fate, not his lust, leads him on,¹⁸² he later

¹⁷⁰ *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 2518-23. See also ll. 824-25, 1668.

¹⁷¹ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 544-46.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, ll. 1395-1401.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, ll. 1449-50.

¹⁷⁴ *The Queen*, ll. 3853-55.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1885-87.

¹⁷⁶ *Love's Sacrifice*, l. 1333.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 1713-14.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 1779.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2823-25. See also ll. 2341-43.

¹⁸⁰ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 142-43.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 294-95.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, ll. 308-9.

excuses his prurient passion; and, still later, after reasoning with love and despising his fate, after having done "all that smooth'd-cheeke Vertue could aduise," he finds his argument "bootelesse"; it is his "destiny" to be loved by Annabella,¹⁸³ who herself believes the stars have directed their passion,¹⁸⁴ forbidding her to love Soranzo, her husband-to-be:

Soran. Haue you not will to loue?
Anna. Not you. *Soran.* Whom then?
Anna. That's as the Fates inferre.
Gio. Of these I'me regient now.¹⁸⁵

Fate as an excuse to follow individual whim could hardly go beyond this.¹⁸⁶

Beauty and goodness are one and the same. A main tenet of the Platonic cult was that virtue resides in beauty; and, consequently, since court dramatists wished their women to be very paragons of purity, they first painted them in extravagant colors of beauty. Ford, too, creates beautiful women, assures us they are pure, and associates their beautiful bodies with virtuous minds. Thamasta has "rare perfections," "admirable beauty";¹⁸⁷ Eroclea's beauty shines through her disguise as a boy;¹⁸⁸ Penthea possesses a very "Heaven of perfections,"¹⁸⁹ is a "Light of beauty"¹⁹⁰ as well as a "shrine";¹⁹¹ Calantha displays "singular perfections,"¹⁹² is a "fairest Princesse"¹⁹³ and a "Most heauenly Lady."¹⁹⁴ In like manner Ford describes

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, ll. 381-89.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 2072-73.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1172-75.

¹⁸⁶ See also *The Broken Heart*, ll. 325, 375, 1092-96, 1341-43, 2058, 2297, 2315-16; and *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 1021, 1747, 2350-55, 2641-42.

¹⁸⁷ *The Lover's Melancholy*, l. 446; see also l. 1679.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 201-6; see also ll. 746, 759, 2123.

¹⁸⁹ *The Broken Heart*, l. 150.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, l. 1290.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, l. 155.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, l. 1357.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, l. 836.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 1419.

his other heroines. Biancha is famed for "her beauty";¹⁹⁵ Fiormonda's miraculous beauty, according to Fernando, is "superlatiue," surpassing that of all ladies abroad;¹⁹⁶ "fayrest"¹⁹⁷ Katherine Gordon possesses "Beautie incomparable";¹⁹⁸ the Queen's "dazeling splendor"¹⁹⁹ quite distracts Alphonso; and both Spinella and Castanna are "faire and matchlesse."²⁰⁰ But sometimes Ford is not content merely to suggest the superlative beauty of his women; he fills in the main lines with rich strokes of detail not surpassed by court writers themselves:

Her faire eyes,
Like to a paire of pointed beames drawne from
The Sunnes most glorious Orbe, does dazle sight,
Audacious to gaze there; then over those
A severall bow of jet securely twinés
In semicircles; under them two bankes
Of roses red and white, divided by
An arch of polisht Ivorie, surveying
A temple from whence Oracles proceed,
More gracious than *Apollo*s, more desir'd
Than amorous songs of Poets, softly tun'd.²⁰¹

Like a sonneteer, Giovanni conjures up a poet's dream as he describes each perfected part of Annabella's body:

View well her face, and in that little round,
You may obserue a world of variety;
For Colour, lips, for sweet perfumes, her breath;
For Iewels, eyes; for threds of purest gold,
Hayre; for delicious choyce of Flowers, cheekes;

¹⁹⁵ *Love's Sacrifice*, l. 193; see also ll. 930 ff., 951-53.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 477-82.

¹⁹⁷ *Perkin Warbeck*, l. 2185.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 2529; see also ll. 1461, 2546-47.

¹⁹⁹ *The Queen*, l. 2541; see also ll. 2383-84, 2398-2406, 2439, 2603.

²⁰⁰ *The Lady's Trial*, l. 2481; see also ll. 97, 157, 737, 1549-51, 1715.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1167-77. Spoken by a "braggadocio Spaniard," these lines may have satirical intent.

Wonder in euery portion of that Throne:
 Heare her but speake, and you will sweare the Sphæres
 Make Musicke to the Cittizens in Heauen:
 But Father, what is else for pleasure fram'd,
 Least I offend your eares shall goe vn-nam'd.²⁰²

Now all Ford's heroines are as virtuous as they are beautiful. Prince Palador addresses Eroclea as a "vizard of a beauty euer sacred";²⁰³ "virtuous"²⁰⁴ Penthea has led a life as "*Pure as are unwritten papers*";²⁰⁵ Calantha is "Diuine."²⁰⁶ Even though she entertains adulterous thoughts about Fernando, "*chast Biancha*"²⁰⁷ is deemed a "spotlesse wife,"²⁰⁸ both by her husband and by her lover; and Fiormonda, who unexpectedly kisses Fernando as she declares her love, is addressed as "the vertuous Marqnesse."²⁰⁹ The ladies of *The Fancies* have "soules /So white as breaths";²¹⁰ Spinella's "purity of thoughts"²¹¹ moves Adurni to proclaim the "power of vertue,"²¹² which is the main idea of *The Lady's Trial*; Castanna is a "branch of goodnesse";²¹³ and "*chast Ladie*"²¹⁴ Katherine possesses "pure thoughts."²¹⁵ But Ford goes beyond describing his beautiful women and proclaiming their incomparable purity; he actually argues that a beautiful body must indicate a virtuous mind. Fernando, after Biancha's face and modest words have struck him to the heart, believes her beauty an index of her mind.²¹⁶ A principal idea in *The Queen* is that beauty must be virtuous; for when

²⁰² 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, ll. 954-63.

²⁰³ *The Lover's Melancholy*, l. 2167.

²⁰⁴ *The Broken Heart*, l. 135.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, l. 2178.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, l. 1792.

²⁰⁷ *Love's Sacrifice*, l. 2611.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 2638; see also ll. 835, 2582.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, l. 532.

²¹⁰ *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 2348-49; see also ll. 256, 375, 526, 1581-82.

²¹¹ *The Lady's Trial*, l. 178.

²¹² *Ibid.*, l. 2132.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, l. 163.

²¹⁴ *Perkin Warbeck*, l. 1997.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, l. 2021.

²¹⁶ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 263-65.

Muretto casts a planned slur on the Queen by stating that it is a pity "Shee should not be as fair within as without,"²¹⁷ Alphonso declares he would give his kingdom and live a slave to her could her perfections be proved not to lodge a foul soul;²¹⁸ nor is his troubled mind cleared until Muretto explains why she is as pure as a "new born virgin":

I ever whisperd so much in your ears my Lord, and told you, that it was impossible such singular endowments by nature, should yeild to the corruption so much, as of an unworthy thought. Did I not tell you so from time to time.²¹⁹

But this doctrine emerges most clearly in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*. Incestuous Giovanni needed greatly a belief that would make Annabella as pure in mind as she was beautiful in body; hence he leaned upon Platonic casuistry, asserting

that the Fame
And Composition of the *Minde* doth follow
The Frame and Composition of *Body*:
So where the *Bodies* furniture is *Beauty*,
The *Mindes* must needs be *Virtue*: which allowed,
Virtue it selfe is *Reason but refin'd*,
And *Loue* the Quintessence of that, this proues
My Sisters *Beauty* being rarely *Faire*,
Is rarely *Vertuous*.²²⁰

This idea—that physical beauty postulates a pure soul—is a mainspring of Ford's thought; even Montague and Carlell, whose dramatic characters used the same reasoning to explain away many liberties in love, were not more profoundly affected by this particular tenet which allowed Ford to purify incest.

Beautiful women are saints to be worshiped. Ford's romantic cast of mind made him particularly susceptible to the rite of worshiping beautiful women. After having created ladies of incomparable beauty and virtue, he be-

²¹⁷ *The Queen*, ll. 3362-63.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 3364-67.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 3633-39. ²²⁰ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 920-28.

lieved, because of beauty's divinity²²¹ and power,²²² that such saints should command adoration; with Nearchus, he felt that even Princes should bow before love's awful throne:

Calan. A Prince, a subiect? *Near.* Yes, to beauties scepter:
As all hearts kneele so mine. *Calan.* You are too Courtly.²²³

His heroines consequently become, as they did in court drama, shrines before which votaries knelt in sacred worship. Bassanes, regretting the former jealousy he held for Penthea, makes her an idol and implores the gods to forgive him for dragging in the dust "That Temple built for adoration onely";²²⁴ and after she has declared her innocence concerning her love for Orgilus, he asks permission to "kneele" before his "goddesse."²²⁵ Earlier Ithocles had canonized her, predicting that heartsick people in future days will worship at her shrine:

thou shalt stand
A Deity (my sister) and be worship'd,
For thy resolved martyrdome: wrong'd maids,
And married wiues shall to thy hallowed shrine
Offer their orisons, and sacrifice
Pure Turtles crown'd with mirtle.²²⁶

In the same way Warbeck praises Katherine's perfections, stating that immortality shall raise up her name in adoration and that she shall become a "Saint" in the "*Calender of vertue*";²²⁷ and the Duke, in *Love's Sacrifice*, sanctifies the goodly "shrine" of Biancha's "fairest purity" as he stands in worship before her dead body.²²⁸ Giovanni praises Annabella's beauty, which even the gods should kneel

²²¹ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 1737-38.

²²² *The Queen*, ll. 1378-79.

²²³ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 1382-83.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, l. 1835.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, l. 1307.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 1209-14.

²²⁷ *Perkin Warbeck*, ll. 2684-89.

²²⁸ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 2742-45; see also ll. 1178-1200.

to;²²⁹ Velasco, to whom Salassa is a goddess, humbly kneels in his "heart" and makes his life "tenant" to her "pleasure";²³⁰ Flavia becomes an "Angell" rather to be "worshipt,/Then grosly to be talked with";²³¹ and Adurni, led on by the beauty of Spinella, Auria's wife, offers devotion on the altar of her "all-commanding beauty":

Deare, how sweetly
 Reproofe droopes from that baulmy spring your breath,
 Now could I read a lecture of my griefes
 Un-earth a mine of Jewells at your foote,
 Command a golden shower to raine downe,
 Impoverish every Kingdome of the east,
 Which trafficks richest cloathes, and silkes; would you
 Vouchsafe one, unspleend chiding to my riot,
 Else such a sacrifice can but beget
 Suspition of returnes, to my devotion,
 In mercenary blessings, for that saint
 To whom I vow my selfe, must never want
 Fit offerings to her altar.²³²

And when Alphonso finds the Queen as beautiful in mind as in body, he invokes all to kneel before the angel of his affection:

Lay by your arms, my lords, and joyn with me.
 Let's kneel to this (what shall I call her?) Woman?
 No, she's an Angel. Glory of Creation, *All kneel.*
 Can you forget my wickedness?²³³

Ford burnt incense before beautiful women with even more awe than votaries in court.

True love is of equal hearts and divine. The meaning of love aroused many debates in the Platonic cult. Is love carnal, or spiritual and holy? was a question of which its

²²⁹ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 77-80.

²³⁰ *The Queen*, ll. 1378-88.

²³¹ *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 626-27.

²³² *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 1043-55.

²³³ *The Queen*, ll. 3640-46.

members never apparently tired. Love should be of the soul, they usually concluded; love should be the union of equal hearts; and so Ford believed also. Any love, licit or not, was chaste and pure if it arose from the worship of beauty,²³⁴ if it was of the soul and divine in its origin. Palador makes it clear that Eroclea's heart has been contracted to his, that Cleophila has been joined in soul to Amethus;²³⁵ and Rhetias remarks at their union that "truth and iustice" have been achieved.²³⁶ Orgilus and Penthea, however, have not been so fortunate; their "holy vnion" of souls—a union so strong that time cannot "eat into the pledge"²³⁷—has been broken by Ithocles; and Orgilus has thus been left languishing because their contract of equal hearts has not been fulfilled:

Such is the leannesse of a heart diuided
From entercourse of troth-contracted loues;
No horror should deface that precious figure
Seal'd with the liuely stampe of equall soules.²³⁸

Moreover, because of her unnatural union with Bassanes, Penthea feels that "cruelty" has "enforc'd/Diuorce betwixt" her "body" and her heart.²³⁹ Again and again Ford mentions the contract of souls and the necessity for unity in true love. Giovanni sees the "sinne" of sharing "one beauty to a double soule,"²⁴⁰ and later recalls the glory of "two vnited hearts" like Annabella's and his;²⁴¹ Katherine makes Warbeck a sweet pledge of both their "soules,"

²³⁴ Ford definitely connects love and beauty in *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 1563-65:

Love deare Maid,
Is but desire of beauty, and 'tis proper
For beauty to desire to be belov'd.

²³⁵ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 2708-10.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, l. 2713.

²³⁷ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 120-23.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 914-17. Also, Ithocles laments that he did not see into the "commanding Loue" between Penthea and Orgilus (ll. 780-82).

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 932-33.

²⁴⁰ 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, ll. 399-400.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, l. 2156.

swearing to remain true to his bed forever;²⁴² Alphonso, whose love for the Queen sprang from an equality of souls, says she is "deep enthron'd" in his heart;²⁴³ and Velasco vows in his "soul" a "debt of service" to his "deity," Salassa.²⁴⁴ Also, divinity lies within this love of souls. Love is tributary to the laws of beauty,²⁴⁵ which is divine; hence love itself is divine, Katherine implying that heaven joined her soul with Warbeck's:

no Divorce in Heaven
Ha's beene sued out betweene vs; 'tis injustice
For any earthly power to deuide vs
Or wee will liue, or let vs dye together.²⁴⁶

The Queen also recognizes the "sacred Matrimonial tye of hearts," called "marriage," which "has Divinity within't."²⁴⁷ Ford's chief interest, however, lay within the divinity of love itself, whether within the marriage bond or not.

Love is all-important and all-powerful. To the Platonics all other passions were subdeities of love; and to Ford, also, all else was subordinate to its power. No trouvère could have worshiped the god of love more; no sonneteer could have felt more his strength. Beauty, which causes love, commands

*all Story,
All armes, all arts,
All loues, all hearts;*²⁴⁸

it has engendered a "commanding Loue" between Penthea and Orgilus so great that he claims Bassanes may never "vsurpe" her "heart/ Before contracted" his.²⁴⁹ Love also assumes privileges not granted to other emotions. The Duke, in *Love's Sacrifice*, owes heaven alone for his

²⁴² *Perkin Warbeck*, ll. 2707-8. ²⁴³ *The Queen*, ll. 2136-37.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 1383-88. ²⁴⁵ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 410-14.

²⁴⁶ *Perkin Warbeck*, ll. 2672-75. ²⁴⁷ *The Queen*, ll. 1888-90.

²⁴⁸ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 1133-35. ²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 139-46.

love;²⁵⁰ therefore why should he be told by his "gray-headed Senate" where his affections shall fall?²⁵¹ Giovanni thinks it easier to control the tides than to dissuade him of his vows of love,²⁵² and longs it were not counted sin by religion to make "loue a God, and worship it"²⁵³ — which is exactly what he does through the play. For "earthly power" to divide Katherine from Warbeck would be unjust;²⁵⁴ so true is Auria's unforced love for Spinella that to breach their union would be "Unpardonable."²⁵⁵ The whole meaning of Ford's plays, in fact, rests on the supremacy of love over all, on the belief that beauty and love should command more respect than convention and law; he could not brook custom that might judge against beauty, or conceive any crisis of unsatisfied passion, adultery, or incest where love should not conquer.

Now these tenets led Ford into the ethical casuistry found in Platonic court drama. Believing that fate rules all actions, that beauty and goodness are one and the same, that beauty itself should be worshiped, that love arising from beauty is of the soul and divine and all-powerful, he absolved his lovers from sin simply because they were beautiful and loved in their souls. He shows true love to be more important than marriage, sets up this love as the sole guide to virtue, and allows his lovers every freedom of action or thought.

True love is more important than marriage. In Platonic court drama nearly all plays end with the prospect of marriage, but marriage itself, as a convention, is not highly regarded, particularly if it comes into conflict with individual desire. This attitude Ford thoroughly endorses. In his first independent play, through Cleophila's advice to Menaphon, who is in love with Thamasta, he sounds

²⁵⁰ *Love's Sacrifice*, l. 289.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 271-73.

²⁵² *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 122-23.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, ll. 300-301.

²⁵⁴ *Perkin Warbeck*, ll. 2673-74.

²⁵⁵ *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 2448-51.

a keynote which rings loud and clear in the rest of his drama: the ties of marriage are subordinate to true love of souls. Even as Cleophila urges Menaphon to marry Tharmasta, she asks

That no time, no perswasion, no respects
Of Iealousies past, present, or hereafter
By possibilitie to be conceiued,
Draw you from that sincerity and purenesse
Of loue, which you haue oftentimes protested
To this great worthy Lady: she deserues
A duty more, then what the tyes of Marriage
Can claime, or warrant: be for euer hers,
As she is yours, and Heauen increase your comforts.²⁵⁶

So, in *The Broken Heart*, Penthea feels that her unrequited love for Orgilus deserves more duty than the ties of marriage which bind her to Bassanes, who, through his jealousy, disgraces all nuptial vows; and Orgilus, through his worship of love, in a flourish of rhetoric puts a halo of purity around his clandestine wooing of Penthea and senses no guilt in his passionate, yet illicit, worship:

Time can neuer
On the white table of vnguilty faith
Write counterfeit dishonour; turne those eyes
(The arrowes of pure loue) vpon that fire
Which once rose to a flame, perfum'd with vowes
As sweetly scented as the Incense smoking
The holiest Artars, Virgin Teares (like
On *Vesta's* odours) sprinkled dewes to feed 'em,
And to increase their feruour.²⁵⁷

And Penthea herself, loving Orgilus and married to Bassanes, weeps over her "wrack'd honour," deems her actions unchaste because law approves what her soul cannot sanction, finds "no peace left for a rauish'd wife/Widdow'd

²⁵⁶ *The Lover's Melancholy*, ll. 2318-26.

²⁵⁷ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 901-9.

by lawlesse marriage," and predicts that to all memory "poore *Penthea's* name" will be "strumpeted."²⁵⁸ In *Love's Sacrifice*, Biancha, seeing no wrong in breaking convention if her love for Fernando is pure, openly questions the law as she ponders her illicit passion and convinces herself that no sin lies in nightly meetings with her courtly lover:

Why shouldst thou not be mine? why should the laws
The Iron lawes of Ceremoney, barre
Mutuall embraces? what's a vow? a vow?
Can there be sinne in vnity?²⁵⁹

But Giovanni, in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, is the greatest rebel of all. Believing firmly that his incestuous love is chaste and right, he rebukes his counselor, who has suggested marriage for Annabella to save both from destruction, and claims marriage without union of souls nothing but foul sin. Marriage? he questions. Why that damns her; that proves her greedy of "lust."²⁶⁰ Never repenting his incestuous love, Giovanni to the end holds his course noble, even his getting his sister with child. Lavishing all his sympathy and some of his best poetry upon these characters, Ford seems to suggest that they are right and that his more conventional people, like Bassanes and Friar Bonaventura, are wrong; he would have us believe that any vagary of love is pure if founded in beauty.

True love is the sole guide to virtue. Although the Platonics did not respect the vows of marriage, they did hold in awe those of true love when they agreed with lovers' individual desires. Law was whim, not custom and use; hence the breaking of Platonic vows became sin. Ford's characters utter similar thoughts. Even though *Penthea* has been forced on Bassanes, she considers herself because of her marriage a "faith-breaker,"²⁶¹ "A spotted

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 1951-55.

²⁵⁹ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 2353-56.

²⁶⁰ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 946-47.

²⁶¹ *The Broken Heart*, l. 1196.

whore,"²⁶² possessing a "leprous soule."²⁶³ Outwardly she kept faith with Bassanes, but guilt corrodes her heart for having broken her vows to Orgilus until she cries out in grief that "No falshood/Equals a broken faith"; she complains that every hair on her head becomes a "leaden Plummet" which "sinks" her to her "grauē."²⁶⁴ Biancha, however, suffers no such pangs of conscience. More callous than Penthea, she glibly denies her secret boudoir-love with Fernando, or at least will not admit she has broken her marriage vows to the Duke;²⁶⁵ and Fernando, not caring whether the Duke knows of their clandestine meetings, openly states that she is still "loyall in her plighted faith."²⁶⁶ Giovanni carries such thinking to absurdity when he brands his sister "faithlesse" for her having repented their incest after her marriage with Soranzo. Are you going "to proue treacherous/ To your past vowes and oathes?" he acidly inquires.²⁶⁷ Like the Platonics, he argues that "Wise Nature" in first creation meant to bring lovers together—meant to make Annabella his. If this were not so, it would be "sinne and foule,/To share one beauty to a double soule."²⁶⁸ Hence Giovanni, like Aurelio in *A Fine Companion*, claimed his "due" in a world where each follows his own bent and by instinct loves the fairest; to both of them, true love of souls was the sole guide to virtue.

True love allows any liberty of action and thought. No-where is Ford's thought more twisted than in his attempt to reconcile Platonic love with physical desire, or in his trying to make vows of true love eternal while he recognizes the power of beauty and the rights of individual whim. He would have his characters constant in love, yet allows them to shift their affections if they so desire; he

²⁶² *The Broken Heart*, l. 1197.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, l. 1976.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 1882-85.

²⁶⁵ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 2255-57.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 2321-23.

²⁶⁷ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 2300-2304.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 398-400.

would have them love with their souls only, yet they tasted carnal delights; he would make adultery and incest pure if his lovers are beautiful.

Platonic lovers liked to believe themselves constant; but they transferred their love with ease when greater beauty bade them do so. In the same way Biancha shifts her love from the Duke to Fernando, who at first sight became king of her heart;²⁶⁹ and she boldly defends her change of heart by arguing with her husband that a similar appetite led him to love her. She declares that her beauty was greater than any he had seen before and hence he was led to love her. Likewise she now turns to Fernando, the "selfe same appetite" leading her to love him. Moreover, the Duke's sheets have not yet been wronged only because Fernando has been slow, not because she did not desire him.²⁷⁰ Yet despite this open disclosure of prurience Biancha emerges from the argument with purified feelings of being true to her love.

Furthermore, these lovers of souls took even more interesting freedom. Platonic law condoned "communative love," or, as Sir Amadine Puny in *Lady Alimony* put it, "all things in common"; therefore any physical liberty was chaste. "Why may not a faire Lady have like privilege/Of several servants," asks Clarella of Romanello, "if a man may love so many?"²⁷¹ Romanello does not answer directly, although "famous Schollers" have argued "*pro* and *con*" and "Volumes have been writ" on the question;²⁷² but Muretto, in *The Queen*, answers it clearly in response to Alphonso's query, "What kiss and toy, wink, prate, yet be vertuous?" with "Why not Sir?"²⁷³ He then continues:

I think now a woman may lie four or five nights together

²⁶⁹ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 1296-97.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 2452-72.

²⁷¹ *The Fancies: Chaste and Noble*, ll. 1419-21.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, ll. 1428-31.

²⁷³ *The Queen*, ll. 1669-71.

with a man, and yet be chaste; though that be very hard, yet so long as 'tis possible, such a thing may be.²⁷⁴

Earlier he had stated that it is fit and meet for the Queen to pass her time in chaste dalliance—"to discourse familiarly with her supporter, is courtly and passing innocent."²⁷⁵ Auria, in *The Lady's Trial*, presents the same argument as he tells of his youth, when by "stealth of privacie" he enjoyed "A Ladies closet"; but he is quick to imply that he never profaned the shrine of chastity or he would have lost the privilege of such "freedome."²⁷⁶ Penthea's marital vows do not prevent her from meeting Orgilus, stooping to kiss his hand,²⁷⁷ and later declaring that she was never "guilty of a wanton error."²⁷⁸ Fernando clandestinely melts the ice of Biancha's reserve and becomes her servant; and Biancha confesses that she lost no time in winning him to her bosom, but so "holily" and with such "Religion"²⁷⁹ that in spite of nocturnal bedroom visits accompanied with kisses she does not "blush to speake"²⁸⁰ such a love, nor does Fernando wish (heaven forbid) to profane by "wanton appetite" the "sacred Temple."²⁸¹ Annabella freely admits her "stolne contents" with Giovanni, but her "hearts delight" prevailed and she is not ashamed.²⁸² To these characters, true love was the sole ethical criterion and hence allowed any vagary of action or thought; for when Collumello, the Queen's counselor, asks: "Was ever woman false that lov'd so truly?"²⁸³ all Ford's heroes and heroines answer, "No."

The supremacy of love so profoundly smote Ford that he even absolved adultery and incest. After Biancha, in

²⁷⁴ *The Queen*, ll. 1671-75.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1640-44.

²⁷⁷ *The Broken Heart*, ll. 940-42.

²⁷⁹ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 2485-89.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1365-68.

²⁷⁶ *The Lady's Trial*, ll. 1436-41.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 1305-6.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, l. 2496.

²⁸² *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 530-32.

²⁸³ *The Queen*, l. 3510. When this question was asked, Alphonso thought the Queen not chaste; but later we find her as pure as her love is true.

"her night mantle," has aroused Fernando from his bed to give up her "body" to his "embraces,"²⁸⁴ after they have kissed and pledged vows of true love in the privacy of Fernando's room, after she has questioned the "Iron lawes of Ceremony"²⁸⁵ and longed to "purchase one nights rest"²⁸⁶ with her true lover, he absolves her from "any lust," and her husband mutters over her dead body, sacrificed to his jealousy, "Chast, chast, and kild by me."²⁸⁷ To be sure, they were not actually guilty of physical crime; nevertheless the sanctification of adultery could hardly go further.²⁸⁸

'*Tis Pity She's a Whore* leaves the main road completely. The play opens with Giovanni's questioning the worth of customary form:

Shall a peeuish sound,
A customary forme, from man to man,
Of brother and of sister, be a barre
Twixt my perpetuall happinesse and mee?
Say that we had one father, say one wombe,
(Curse to my ioyes) gaue both vs life, and birth;
Are wee not therefore each to other bound
So much the more by Nature; by the the [*sic*] links
Of blood, of reason; Nay if you will hau't,
Euen of Religion, to be euer one,
One soule, one flesh, one loue, one heart, one *All*?²⁸⁹

After deciding they should be one flesh, he argues, like a court Platonist, that since she is fair she must therefore be pure, that since she is pure her love must therefore be chaste; hence, since her love to him is chaste, so is his love

²⁸⁴ *Love's Sacrifice*, l. 1331.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 2353-56.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 2359-62.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, l. 2651.

²⁸⁸ For further comment on Fernando's courtship, see the *Monthly Review*, LXVII (1812), 378: "The amour of Fernando and Bianca . . . is such as the *Courts of Love* would not only have sanctioned but extolled."

²⁸⁹ '*Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 82-92.

for her, "Since in like Causes are effects alike."²⁹⁰ Then after their stolen delights, after he has got her with child, after her subsequent marriage to save her from shame, Giovanni washes their crime free from stain because she was beautiful and because they loved with their souls:

if euer after times should heare
Of our fast-knit affections, though perhaps
The Lawes of *Conscience* and of *Ciuill use*
May iustly blame vs, yet when they but know
Our loues, *That loue* will wipe away that rigour,
Which would in other *Incests* bee abhorr'd.²⁹¹

And he bids Annabella pray that she may go "white" in her "soule" "to fill a Throne/Of Innocence and Sanctity in Heauen."²⁹² The issues in the conflict between individual rights and conventional law could hardly be put more succinctly.

Ford's close relationship to the tenets and ethics of court Platonism is thus clear. With court dramatists, Ford made love his religion, exalted individual whim, and worshiped a morality "higher" than law and convention; and, since the cult shaped court drama while Ford wrote most seriously, it seems probable that he found his romantic theory of love in Henrietta Maria's Platonic coterie. With D'Avenant, Carlell, Montague, and other court dramatists he drank from a fount of casuistry which undeniably tainted their plays and which no doubt prejudiced the Puritan mind against Whitehall. Thus, in the then current debate over matters of marriage and love, Ford seems to have joined hands with the court; at any rate, through flesh and blood drama he belittled marital ties and argued convincingly for individual rights.

²⁹⁰ *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, ll. 929-31. ²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2380-85.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, ll. 2374-75. The main characters not only forgive themselves; Putana says that Giovanni is "as braue a Gentleman as euer kist faire Lady" (ll. 1999-2000).

Such arguments for unbridled individualism in matters of marriage and love relate Ford to the modern mind. His rebellious heroes and heroines contend for freedoms not only familiar to the mind of today but also, at least some of them, commonly associated with modern faiths and beliefs. Like Milton in his pamphlets, Rousseau in his novels, and Byron in his greater poems, Ford carried to a logical extreme the claim of individual rights against accepted conventions and thus, in one sense, stands cheek by jowl with those very men who have been popularly tagged prophets of modern thought. Perhaps this is the reason why Charles Lamb, during the period of romantic revolt, saw Ford pursuing a "right line even in obliquity," and why subsequent critics felt in Ford's plays some kind of modernity.

CHAPTER 4

The Tragic Muse

SCIENTIFIC DETERMINISM and the gospel of individualism so shaped the mind of John Ford that his tragic muse speaks in tones familiar to modern man. That he could have derived from afar the faiths and beliefs which allow his tragic muse to speak thus, however, must be candidly granted; many forces of thought other than those evident in his immediate *milieu* could have converged to make his plays appear modern. His belief in determinism might have come from a long oral tradition of moral philosophy, or from the Stoic philosophers of ancient Greece; his faith in individualism could have easily stemmed from innumerable sources, both old and new. Even his early literary attempts show the breadth of his reading and indicate that he had pondered what he had read with care. His first poem, *Fame's Memorial*, is steeped in the tradition of idealized and romantic love; *Christ's Bloody Sweat*,¹ a poem on the atonement, and *A Line of Life*, a philosophical treatise, display a knowledge of Christian and of classical thought. And in his later years Ford considered himself a sort of leisurely scholar and thus no doubt pursued further his studies of both ancient and modern authors. Such continued study and reflection unquestionably helped shape his mind and hence mightily influenced his serious drama.

¹ M. Joan Sargeaunt presents convincing evidence that this poem was written by Ford. See her article, "Writings Ascribed to John Ford by Joseph Hunter in *Chorus Vatum*," in *The Review of English Studies*, X (1934), 165-76.

Yet Ford's specific reference to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and his close relation to coterie manners and morals indicate that Ford was alive to the "new philosophy" and to the current debate concerning the gospel of individual rights. If these forces, which flourished during Ford's life, were not chiefly responsible for molding his thought, they at least lent immediacy to his plays and allowed him to express with greater vigor and with firmer conviction what might have been growing in his mind since his youth. And of all his dramas, *The Broken Heart*, *Love's Sacrifice*, and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*—the three tragedies upon which his reputation as a dramatist rests—express most clearly and vigorously what seemed to be uppermost in his mind. The action of these tragedies is so solidly based upon scientific necessity and their characters are so consistently sympathetic to unbridled individualism, that it is hard to escape the conclusion that Ford is here presenting by the objective method of the stage his most profound observations upon life. At any rate, because of scientific necessity and the claims of extreme individualism, these plays present unresolvable dilemmas, even as for the same reasons modern tragedies are replete with conflicts which seem to admit no solution. Indeed, the presentation of such dilemmas with their attendant confusions allows Ford his strongest claim to modernity. For Ford's tragic muse tells stories filled with such despair and confusion that, with a few minor changes, they could pass for tragic tales today.

I

The modernity of Ford's tragic muse may best be made clear by contrasting Tudor and modern concepts of tragedy. Although this contrast may seem at the outset somewhat invidious, it is not meant to be so; nor is it an untimely attempt to pass judgment upon the relative values of tragedy now and that which walked the boards three cen-

turies ago. Rather, its sole purpose is to point out the profound gulf which separates Renaissance and present-day conceptions of tragedy in order to illustrate that *The Broken Heart*, *Love's Sacrifice*, and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* stand closer, both in nature and function, to the tragedies of Henrik Ibsen and of Eugene O'Neill than to those of Shakespeare or Webster.

Elizabethan tragedy was in the main Aristotelian; and Aristotle's *Poetics* shows tragedy to be the story of human blindness and error leading to effects opposite from those intended, the final truth of which the catastrophe ironically reveals.² Such errors may or may not be moral; the universe need not necessarily proceed by known laws of justice; but the laws of cause and effect must function objectively, and man's errors must find him out in unvarying patterns. No drowned man, for example, must revive because his motives are pure, nor must grain spring from tares; and the excellence of this sort of tragedy is that its logic convinces, its form is concise, and its irony evident and sharp. Now in Renaissance England this same concept prevailed, though it owed little to the Greeks and emerged tinged with a Christian difference after a long medieval development.³ In the *Mirror for Magistrates*—a veritable storehouse of tragic material—medieval mutability began to be but another name for man's responsible action;⁴ and as a result the concept which received the most widespread attention was the Christian notion that catastrophe follows moral defection.⁵ The Tudor period thus conceived of

² *Aristotle on the Art of Poetry* (trans. by Ingram Bywater, Oxford, 1920), *passim*. See also F. L. Lucas, *Tragedy in Relation to Aristotle's "Poetics"* (New York, 1928), for an excellent analysis of the nature and function of tragedy.

³ See Willard Farnham, *The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Berkeley, 1936), for a detailed treatment of this idea.

⁴ See Lily B. Campbell, *Tudor Conceptions of History and Tragedy in "A Mirror for Magistrates"* (Berkeley, 1936).

⁵ Hardin Craig, "The Shackling of Accidents: A Study of Elizabethan Tragedy," *Philological Quarterly*, XIX (1940), 1-19.

tragedy as a dramatic progress from cause to effect, even as the Greeks had earlier described it.

Shakespeare took over this concept and stamped it with indelible life and unforgettable character; moreover, through a series of plays he again made tragedy excellent for its logic, conciseness, and irony, comparable to any drama the Greek age had produced. Neither he nor the Greeks make tragic justice an open book; they both, however, make life magnificently heroic in their intolerance of evil and they never allow villainy to remain victorious and prosperous in the end. Furthermore, in both Renaissance and Greek concepts man is free to pursue paths of destruction in a world of evil and good, and deepest tragedy comes when free will, not necessity, brings man to his doom, when tragic heroes with their own unwitting hands shape their deaths or ironically kill the things they love most.

Macbeth exhibits excellently the main nature and function of this kind of tragedy. Struggling in a world both hostile and fearful, and goaded by the taunts of his wife, Macbeth kills Duncan in order to forward his own plans, and thus brings grief to himself and to others. In the course of the action he offers no excuse for his blood-lacing crime; and, since events inexorably unroll according to the logic of cause and effect, his defeat and death at the end seem wholly natural and real. But of more importance than this is the fact that such events arouse pity and fear, pity for man's weakness and fear for his dreadful course in a world of implacable forces. Yet what is remarkable is that the end of the action allays tragic qualms; for Macbeth's sure march to his doom reveals an intolerance of evil and demonstrates the human law of cause and effect. Such a demonstration hurls defiance at blind physical forces and gives rise to a sense of grim joy; and pity and fear are thus purged.

Modern tragedy, however, neither presents such a he-

roic picture nor produces such healthful results. Born of contemporary habits of mind, it reveals the ethical impasse of modern skeptical thought and in so doing bludgeons the spirit of man numb with despair. Science, for example, engenders conflicts between necessity and ancient moral injunctions; claims of the ego question the value of established ethical laws; and the dilemmas arising from such unresolvable strife parade for evaluation and thought. Henrik Ibsen, for instance, shows through the body of his plays the clash of "true self" with the world's moral order; Thomas Hardy presents life as a futile and meaningless journey, hedged by scientific statutes beyond man's control; Eugene O'Neill, through Nina's reference to "scientific" adultery in *Strange Interlude*, suggests that an amoral approach to conventional sin may release man from old burdens and fears. All these playwrights argue so realistically that confusions arise; moreover, they so sharpen the ethical impasse into which Western thought has gradually fallen that contemplation of such proposals, instead of purging pity and fear, arouses fresh mental and moral despair. Thus tragedy now, in both nature and function, is a far cry from *Macbeth* or *Othello*, whose portrayal of man's defeat in a world of retributive justice makes life heroic and allays tragic qualms. In short, the spirit of modern tragedy depends not upon Christian notions of justice, or the recognition of objective ethical law, but upon scientific necessity and individual rights which conflict with the highest ideals of man. As a consequence, Shakespeare and Ibsen, though both mightily tragic, present quite different pictures of man's unfortunate course through a world of unyielding law and hence produce effects also totally different.

This contrast by no means fully represents modern and Tudor conceptions of tragedy; nevertheless, such a juxtaposition clearly reveals that John Ford's tragic muse is closer in spirit to Ibsen's *Ghosts* than to Shakespeare's

Macbeth or *Othello*. For Ford did more than merely absorb the psychology of Burton and the theology of coterie love; he made the spirit back of these forces a part of his thought. Consequently, John Ford shows man ruled by scientific necessity, points out the clash of ego and old moral laws, and in the end reaches an ethical impasse, from which arise both despair and confusion.

II

The Broken Heart, dramatically Ford's most powerful play, presents clear-cut dilemmas which spring from the clash of physical demands and moral injunctions. Ithocles has forced his sister Penthea into loveless marriage with jealous Bassanes subsequent to her pledging vows of coterie love to Orgilus; as a result she finds herself unable to consummate desires aroused by this pledge because convention stands between her and her love. Being thus thwarted, she develops heroical love, which according to Burtonian formula demands satisfaction or else brings on death; and, since she is loath to cure her disease by openly flaunting conventional ethics, she droops to her grave a victim of forces beyond her control.

Now such events are not strange, nor were such situations completely unknown to other Renaissance playwrights; in fact, through part of the play it appears that Penthea's grief and destruction sprang from Ithocles' error and hence should be deemed logical and just. Moreover, Penthea's pitiful plight and the sense that wrong has been done her move the audience to sympathetic condolence and even elicit from her dramatic companions words of concern. Ithocles, for example, pricked in conscience for having injured so excellent a maid, calls her a "Wrong'd soule";⁶ Calantha, possibly thinking of her own thwarted love, addresses her as a "wrong'd Lady";⁷ and Orgilus,

⁶ *The Broken Heart*, l. 1177; see also l. 1245.

⁷ *Ibid.*, l. 1633.

upon hearing Penthea's sad commentary concerning the reasons for her childless life, pledges true love anew and considers her to be a "wrong'd creature."⁸ It thus seems clear that, because of Ithocles' error in judgment, grief has been visited upon an innocent victim; and, since the course of events was initiated by a recognized error, what unrolls appears both logical and just and no disturbing ethical questions arise.

Closer inspection, however, reveals that Ford subtly suggests that, not Ithocles' error, but custom itself must be blamed for the trend of tragic events; and the mind grows confused in pondering the dilemma this notion engenders. To be sure, Ford agrees with traditional ethics that marriage may bring comforts and joys unknown to promiscuous lovers;⁹ yet he argues that marital ties should never prevail against those of true love. Hence with a good deal of detail he points out that Penthea's case demands special treatment: She has sworn vows of true love; in her heart she is therefore wife to Orgilus, by both her own and her lover's admission;¹⁰ and because this is so she becomes deathly ill, her soul lying where her body cannot.¹¹ Ford thus holds up convention in an unholy light and in effect makes Penthea's legal tie to Bassanes the actual villain. But Ford is hardly content to stop here. He stresses that since Penthea and Orgilus are married in soul their mutual longings are chaste; thus her physical tie with her husband becomes one of faith-breaking and whoredom.¹² The existing moral order is thus turned upside down; right becomes wrong and wrong becomes right, all because Penthea and Orgilus swore vows of true love. In a plaint which brings to a head such confusion, Penthea cries to the world that her name has been strum-

⁸ *The Broken Heart*, l. 1916.

⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1493-1504.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 947, 972, 1200-1202.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 1593-94.

¹² *Ibid.*, ll. 1195-97.

peted simply because in a physical sense she stayed true to her husband, Bassanes:

O my wrack'd honour ruin'd by those Tyrants,
A cruell brother, and a desperate dotage!
There is no peace left for a rauish'd wife
Widdow'd by lawlesse marriage; to all memory,
Penthea's, poore *Penthea's* name is strumpeted.¹³

Penthea's plea to posterity would possess little significance had not Ford supported it with scientific necessity. But in backing up this subtle attack upon institutional rights with Burtonian science Ford creates dilemmas which are in every sense real and which smack of the ethical impasse present in modern thought. Penthea's health depends upon realizing her true love for Orgilus; yet custom demands that she be "whore" to her husband. Science decrees and court ethics approve her throwing aside scruples so as to give her ill's proper treatment; yet society commands that she observe marriage vows and so die. Such situations reveal no logic of cause and effect, nor do they show heroic intolerance of evil; rather, they present sharp dilemmas which allow no clear-cut resolution and as a consequence arouse both despair and confusion. Thus in both nature and function, *The Broken Heart* matches Ibsen's *Ghosts* or Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude*.

Love's Sacrifice argues even more openly than *The Broken Heart* against the world's ethical order. Here an ancient triangle situation arises: Fernando develops an adulterous love for the Duke's wife, Biancha. Yet Ford views this old moral defection not through the perspective of the Seventh Commandment but through the enchanted glass of court love and Burtonian science. In short, Ford sees Fernando's affection as virtuous and pure; he further makes clear that unless this passion receives satisfaction necessity will bring Fernando to doom. Thus again mar-

¹³ *Ibid.*, ll. 1951-55.

riage steps in to thwart highest desires and confusion covers the close of the play.

Yet it is only fair to say that in some minor plots Ford's sense of ethical justice appeared to be lively. Perhaps this is true because his minor characters rarely loved by the code of the cult. Ferentes, for example, ranging through a subplot of incredible dullness, lusts after three women, all of whom appear later with child; and Ford's disapproval of him and his victims becomes almost audible. Thus at the beginning of Act III Nibrassa curses Julia, his victimized daughter with child; "strumpet, infamous whore," he cries out in anguish, accusing her of leading a lewd and lascivious life.¹⁴ Immediately following this outburst, Petruchio's daughter, Colona, also receives pointed remarks for stooping to whoredom.¹⁵ Finally Ferentes himself enters, guiding Morona, a stale widow of forty-six, whom he has gotten with child. Viewing his three partners in sin, Ferentes dismisses them with a wave of the hand, advising them as he does so to rip up a shirt or two with which to ease themselves of their burdens. This callous injunction fully justifies Morona's earlier scathing remark that Ferentes is a "periur'd-damnable-vngracious-defiler of women";¹⁶ and, later, when this villain falls pierced with daggers of vengeance, the Abbot pronounces sage judgment:

Here's fatall sad presages, but 'tis iust,
He dyes by murther, that hath liu'd in lust.¹⁷

Thus both logic and justice, so far as the moral order is concerned, obtain in this inconsequential part of the play. But Ford's heroes and heroines who love according to coterie rules demand judgment by "higher" standards.

Fernando's Platonic love for Biancha, its violent course and conclusion, and the combined judgment of the main

¹⁴ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 1388 ff.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, ll. 1417 ff.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 1502-3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 1903-4.

characters concerning their crimes tell the whole story of John Ford's tragic muse. Even in the first few lines of the play, before he intimates a serious analysis of dilemmas arising from the clash of custom and physical law, Ford suggests that "forme" should never prevail over affection, not excepting the observance of funeral rites.¹⁸ Consider the "gray-headed Senate," Ford continues through the mouth of the Duke, which would tie the limits of "free effects" through the "lawes/Of strickt opinion and seuere dispute."¹⁹ He is sure that princes should never do this. Now such ideas of revolt, dropped conveniently from high places at the very time Biancha and Fernando exchange glances of true love, must suggest to Fernando that mere custom should not tie down his unruly and adulterous desires; at any rate, shortly after this scene his passion rises so high that he reasons reasonably against reason that he should quench his flames in the sweet waters of clandestine love.²⁰ Putting into practice such casuistry, he later attempts to make Biancha submit to his overpowering desire.

But Biancha at first rejects Fernando's burning proposals. However, it is not long before she too feels the grip of concupiscible passion, for she has actually fallen in love with Fernando at first sight. Consequently, forced by this love, she steals from her own boudoir to Fernando's bed, pausing at its edge to waken him with passionate but "chaste" words. Then, in a scene almost without equal in the realms of drama, they pledge vows according to coterie manners and morals. Opening her suit with a plaint that the night is short, she reveals her hopes by confessing that since she first saw Fernando love has ruled her heart; in view of this, every word he has spoken has sounded like music and, should he now in her weakness tempt her, she would compassionately yield to his pleasure. Startled by

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 245 ff.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 269 ff.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, ll. 857 ff.

such a forthright confession, Fernando murmurs "Perpetuall happinesse!" but Biancha cuts him off short and continues her suit. She admits that the Duke received her to his bed without dower, and for that kind act she made vows to live constant and so far has done so; moreover, no man in the whole world except Fernando could cause her to break those vows. Then, in ecstasy, she offers her body to him; and Fernando, quite overcome by the fruit his passionate love had earlier nourished, clasps her and indulges in the physical freedoms allowed by the code of coterie love. To be sure, they stop short of complete consummation; but they continue their kisses and pledge anew their true love, swearing their union to be more sacred than her marriage with the Duke. They depart from this scene with purified feelings and with a sense that they have enacted a ritual both holy and chaste.²¹

The last act brings to a violent end their clandestine love; but neither the lovers involved nor Duke Caraffa himself brands such adulterous actions as evil. At first, as might be expected, the Duke, upon catching them deep in their passion, accuses Biancha of breaking her pledge. He does so, however, only because he has not been advised how chaste their love is. Indeed, he here speaks with the voice of convention; for the situation in which he has found his wife and Fernando is, to put it mildly, unusual. They have been enacting their usual ritual behind a drawn curtain, Biancha dressed in her night clothes alone; she has argued that Fernando should be hers, since the iron laws of marriage should erect no bars between her and her happiness. Furthermore, she has claimed that there could be no "sinne in vnity" and has confessed to Fernando that she would rather sleep one night with him than be for a thousand years the Duke's wife. At this juncture, they embrace; and the Duke, who has been standing close by, justly accuses her of being a "shamelesse harlot," a

²¹ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 1285 ff.

"Shamelesse intolerable whoore."²² Biancha, however, quickly defends herself on grounds of Platonic love. The Duke, she continues, could hardly expect her to be faithful with Fernando close by, even though he did raise her from a simple gentlewoman to the honor of a ducal bed. Moreover, in so honoring her the Duke had merely recognized that she was more beautiful than any other woman of his former acquaintance; hence, since the "selfe same appetite" of desiring beauty rules her, she has now turned to Fernando. Biancha then brazenly points out that the Duke's "crooked leg," "scambling foot," and "bloodlesse lip" can hardly hope to compete with Fernando's miracle of flesh and blood, nor is it her fault that the Duke's sheets have never been soiled. She even goes so far as to say that she and Fernando would have coupled long ago had not he, Fernando, kept the laws of friendship "So holily, with such Religion."²³ The Duke, as yet unconvinced that these lovers are chaste, in a sudden rage stabs her; and Biancha, with Fernando's name on her lips, falls mortally wounded.

The Duke now turns to Fernando, who has been led away; and for a while it appears that a duel will decide the issue in hand. But when Fernando hears that "*chast Biancha*/Be murther'd," he drops his weapon and bids death claim him: She was "Innocent," "free from lust," he explains to the Duke; possibly he exceeded in "lawlesse Courtship" but from any actual folly he is free; and, he goes on, the wealth of all worlds could scarcely redeem such a "spotlesse wife."²⁴ Such words convince the Duke that he has committed a foul crime; and, acting upon this conviction, he rushes off to worship at Biancha's tomb, before which he prostrates himself in awed adoration:

²² *Ibid.*, ll. 2424 ff.

²³ *Ibid.*, ll. 2484 ff.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 2609 ff.

Peace and sweet rest sleep here; let not the touch
 Of this my impious hand, prophane the shrine
 Of fairest purity, which houers yet
 About those blessed bones inhearth within:
 To thee, offended spirit, I confesse
 I am *Caraffa*, hee, that wretched man,
 That Butcher, who in my enraged spleene
 Slaughtered the *life of Innocence and Beauty*:
 So chaste, so deare a wife was neuer man,
 But I, enjoyed.²⁵

Fernando now drinks off a vial of poison, the Duke stabs himself, and three innocent people lie stretched out in death.

By thus making what ordinarily passes for sin seem innocent and pure, Ford again raises poignant dilemmas. Here is no logic of cause and effect, no intolerance of evil, no heroic defiance of fate; here is a confused world where convention bars man from realizing celestial love and in so doing brings man to his death. Ford further strengthens this attack upon custom by making it clear that thwarted affection will result in heroical love. Thus Fernando, kept from Bianca's bed by convention, will, because of Burtonian formula, of necessity go to his doom; and the same holds true for Bianca. In thus making adultery pure and in backing up this contention with the laws of scientific necessity, Ford creates a genuine ethical impasse and leaves the mind filled with confusion; in no sense are pity and fear purged.

'*Tis Pity She's a Whore*, however, strikes the most decisive blow against the world's moral order. Here no subtle distinctions between whoredom and marriage arise; instead, the play makes an open problem of incest and thus queries the Christian idea of retributive justice. In fact, a good part of the play discusses the office of justice, and the nature of heaven and hell. The plot opens with

²⁵ *Love's Sacrifice*, ll. 2742-59.

Giovanni's argument that customary form should never bar him from physically loving his sister. Friar Bonaventura, however, the recipient of this contention, assures lovesick Giovanni that "Heauen is iust" and predicts dire consequences should Giovanni act on such an idea;²⁶ but, disregarding the Friar's admonition, Giovanni soon convinces himself that custom is made up of mere dreams and old men's tales intended to frighten unsteady youth.²⁷ Yet somewhat later Giovanni again asks advice from the Friar, who reiterates the justice of God:

But Heauen is angry, and be thou resolu'd,
Thou art a man remark't to tast a mischief,
Looke for't; though it come late, it will come sure.²⁸

Then Giovanni argues on Platonic grounds that since his sister is beautiful she must be pure, and since she is pure their love is chaste. To this Bonaventura answers that Christian justice stands above the law of the ancients, or that of nature:

Indeede if we were sure there were no *Deity*,
Nor *Heauen* nor *Hell*, then to be lead alone,
By Natures light (as were Philosophers
Of elder times) might instance some defence.
But 'tis not so; then Madman, thou wilt finde,
That *Nature* is in Heauens positions blind.²⁹

In addition to this, Bonaventura warns Annabella in colorful language that breakers of moral law will be punished in hell:

in this place

Dwell many thousand, thousand sundry sorts
Of neuer dying deaths; there damned soules
Roare without pitty, there are Gluttons fedd

²⁶ 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, ll. 125 ff.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, ll. 306-7.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, ll. 914-16.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, ll. 934-39.

With Toades and Addars; there is burning Oyle
 Powr'd downe the Drunkards throate, the Vsurer
 Is forc't to sup্প whole draughts of molten Gold;
 There is the Murtherer for-euer stab'd,
 Yet can he neuer dye.³⁰

Yet, in spite of all this, Giovanni stands firm in his rebellion through the entire play, deeming the hell which Bonaventura threatened to be "nought else/But Slauish and fond superstitious feare";³¹ and even at the end of the action he implores the gods to relieve him from the "Curse/Of old prescription"³² so that he may have courage to destroy himself and others.

Ford thus leaves no doubt as to the issues involved in Giovanni's moral defection; both he and his characters seem fully aware that skepticism and old beliefs fought for mastery over the soul of man. Yet Ford wants it clearly understood that the old order should be displaced by the doctrine of individualism only when superior love of the coterie prevails; ordinary sin, he believes, should bring about logical justice. Take the case of Hippolita, for example. Married to Richardetto, she clandestinely loves Soranzo, for whose sake she sends her husband abroad in search of a relative. Richardetto, suspecting his wife, releases rumors of his death, leaving Hippolita free to pursue her adulterous desires, which she prosecutes with such vigor that Richardetto, upon returning in disguise, comments openly upon her "lasciuious riotts" and "loose adultery."³³ Such love as this Ford heartily condemns; and he clarifies his position by making the oaths which passed between Hippolita and Soranzo "wicked and vnlawfull," more sinful to keep than to break.³⁴ Hence at Hippolita's death, which came as a result of her passion and crime, no Fernando praises her spotless purity and

³⁰ 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, ll. 1411-19.

³¹ *Ibid.*, ll. 2145-65.

³² *Ibid.*, ll. 2223-31.

³³ *Ibid.*, ll. 783-91.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, ll. 700-705.

chaste love, no repentant Caraffa bows down at her tomb and absolves her from sin; instead, with poison coursing in her veins, she dies with a curse on her lips and all agree that she has met "Wonderful Iustice."³⁵

But Giovanni's passion for Annabella is pure according to coterie standards; moreover, by Burtonian formula it demands either consummation or Giovanni's death. Hence Giovanni steers an unfortunate course between the Scylla of custom and the Charybdis of heroical love, which takes him to his ultimate doom. But Ford assures his audience that this unhappy young man goes thus to his death for no reason of justice. "The Lawes of *Conscience* and of *Ciwill vse*" may perhaps justly blame him; but Giovanni feels that, when once the world understands how pure his love was, the rigor of censure will disappear. Thus tragedy springs not from Giovanni's breaking the world's moral order but from a misunderstanding of the nature of his celestial love; even the couplet closing the play rings with romantic pity for lovers caught in such a misunderstanding:

*Of one so young, so rich in Natures store,
Who could not say, 'Tis pitty shee's a Whoore?*³⁶

'Tis pity indeed and a dilemma as well; for, because of Giovanni's disease and because of their true love of souls, both stand exempt from the toils of accepted ethical law. Here wheat grows from tares; and contemplation of such an illogical course leads to an impasse, pregnant with despair and confusion.

Thus scientific necessity and the exaltation of individual rights make Ford forever a stranger to Shakespeare. Romeo and Orgilus speak a different language of star-crossed and unfortunate love; Antony and Fernando dwell in different ethical worlds; and Hamlet and Giovanni, both mightily questioning, claim no kinship in word or in

³⁵ *Ibid.*, l. 1708.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 2600-2601.

deed. In point of view, in values, and in basic philosophy John Ford stands on modern ground; and he stands here largely because his tragic muse tells in a modern way the story of man's course in the world.

III

Ford thus has a legitimate claim to his title of prophet. Indeed, the tradition which accorded him this honor sensed the real worth of his drama. Havelock Ellis' statement that Ford "foreboded new ways of expression" assumes meaning in view of scientific determinism; Charles Lamb's intuition that he pursued a "right line even in obliquity" becomes clear in reference to the gospel of individual rights; and the general feeling that Ford expressed in his plays modern values and thought becomes genuinely significant when his tragic muse is compared with that of contemporary playwrights. That he was also high priest of decadence, however, cannot be denied. Yet, however dark and sensational his plays, however packed with horror and crime, dramatic sins which give him this title are abundantly evident in *Cyril Tourneur*, *John Webster*, and *James Shirley* and hence bestow upon him no great distinction. Ford's real distinction lies in his role as a prophet. With an insight unique in his day he foresaw the ethical impasse of a world not only challenging old custom and laws in the name of individual rights but also supporting that challenge by immutable scientific statutes. Such genuine prophecy demands a new place for John Ford in the annals of English drama.

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